

Zen: The Path of Paradox, Vol 2

Talks on Zen, Originally tape title "Path of Paradox".

Talks given from 21/06/77 am to 30/06/77 am

English Discourse series

CHAPTER 1

Hey! Wait a Minute

21 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

ONE EVENING AS SHICHIRI KOJUN WAS RECITING SUTRAS A THIEF WITH A SHARP SWORD ENTERED, DEMANDING EITHER HIS MONEY OR HIS LIFE.

SHICHIRI TOLD HIM: 'DO NOT DISTURB ME. YOU CAN FIND THE MONEY IN THAT DRAWER.' THEN HE RESUMED HIS RECITATION.

A LITTLE WHILE AFTERWARDS HE STOPPED AND CALLED: 'DON'T TAKE IT ALL. I NEED SOME TO PAY TAXES WITH TOMORROW.'

THE INTRUDER GATHERED UP MOST OF THE MONEY AND STARTED TO LEAVE. 'THANK A PERSON WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GIFT,' SHICHIRI ADDED. THE MAN THANKED HIM AND MADE OFF.

A FEW DAYS AFTERWARDS THE FELLOW WAS CAUGHT AND CONFESSED, AMONG OTHERS, THE OFFENCE AGAINST SHICHIRI. WHEN SHICHIRI WAS CALLED AS A WITNESS HE SAID: 'THIS MAN IS NO THIEF, AT LEAST AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED. I GAVE HIM THE MONEY AND HE THANKED ME FOR IT.'

AFTER HE HAD FINISHED HIS PRISON TERM, THE MAN WENT TO SHICHIRI AND BECAME HIS DISCIPLE.

Jesus says, 'Judge ye not.' This was perfect Zen, he had stopped there. But maybe because he was talking to the Jews and he had to talk in a Jewish way, he added, '... so that ye are not judged.' Now it is no more Zen. Now it is a bargain. That addition destroyed its very quality, its very depth.

'Judge ye not' is enough unto itself; nothing is needed to be added to it. 'Judge ye not' means 'Be non-judgemental.' 'Judge ye not' means 'Look at life without any valuation.' Don't evaluate – don't say 'this is good' and don't say 'this is bad'. Don't be moral – don't call something divine, and don't call something evil. 'Judge ye not' is a great statement that there is no God and no Devil.

Had Jesus stopped there, this small saying – only three words, 'judge ye not' – would have transformed the whole character of Christianity. But he added something and destroyed it. He said, '... so that ye are not judged.' Now it becomes conditional. Now it is no more non-judgemental, it is a simple bargain – 'so that ye are not judged.' It is business-like.

Out of the fear – so that ye are not judged – don't judge. But how can you drop judgement out of fear? or out of greed? So that ye are not judged, don't judge – but greed and fear cannot make you value-free. It is very very self-centered – 'Judge ye not, so that you are not judged.' It is very egoistic.

The whole beauty of the saying is destroyed. The Zen flavour disappears, it becomes ordinary. It becomes good advice. It has no more revolution in it; it is parental advice. Very good – but nothing radical. The second clause is a crucifixion of the radical statement.

Zen stops there: Judge ye not. Because Zen says all is as it is – nothing is good, nothing is bad. Things are the way they are. Some tree is tall and some tree is small. And somebody is moral and somebody is immoral. And somebody is praying and some body has gone to steal. That's the way things are.

Now, see the revolutionary flavour of it. It will make you afraid, it will frighten you. That's why Zen has no commandments. It does not say: Do this and don't do that – it has no shoulds and no should-nots. It has not created that prison of the 'ought'. It is not perfectionistic.

And now psychoanalysis knows it well, perfectionism is a kind of neurosis. And Zen is the only religion which is not neurotic. It accepts. Its acceptance is so total, so utterly total, that it will not even call a thief a thief, that it will not even call a murderer a murderer. Try to see the purity of its spirit – try to see the utter transcendence. All is as it is.

Zen is unconditionally value-free – if you make a condition, you miss the point. Zen has no fear and no greed. Zen has no God and no Devil, and Zen has no heaven and no hell. It does not make people greedy by alluring them, promising them rewards in heaven. And it does not make people frightened, scared, by creating nightmarish conceptions of hell.

It does not bribe you by rewards, and it does not punish you with tortures. It simply gives you an insight to see into things – and that insight frees you. That insight has no greed as a base to it and no fear as a base to it. All other religions are greedy, all other religions are based deep down somewhere in fear. That's why we use the word 'god-fearing' for a religious person – a religious person is god-fearing.

But how can fear be religious? It is impossible. Fear can never be religious – only fearlessness. But if you have the idea of good and bad, you can never be fearless. Your ideas of good and bad make people guilty, make people cripples, make people paralyzed. How can you help them to be free from all fear? – impossible. You create MORE fear.

Ordinarily, a man who is not religious is less afraid, has less quantity of fear in his being, than the so-called religious. The so-called religious is continuously trembling inside, continuously anxious whether he is going to make it or he is going to lose it. Is he going to be thrown into hell? Or will he be able to make the impossible and enter into paradise?

Even when Jesus is taking his last leave from his friends and disciples, the disciples are more worried about what their places will be in heaven. They will be meeting next in heaven – what will be their places? Who will be who? Of course, they concede Jesus will be just on the right hand of God – then who is going to be next to him? Their worry comes out of their greed and comes out of their fear. They are not much concerned that Jesus is going to be crucified tomorrow, they are much concerned with their own interests.

All other religions are based in very ordinary greed and fear. The same greed that you have for money one day becomes transformed into the greed for God. Then, God is your money; now, money is your God – that's the only difference. Then God becomes your money. Now you are afraid of the state, of the police, of this and that – and then you start being afraid of hell, and the supreme court, the suprememost court of God... the last day of judgement.

The so-called Christian saints, even in their last moments of life, are constantly trembling, afraid – whether they are going to make it or not.

Zen is unconditionally value-free. Let it sink in you very deeply, because that is my standpoint too. I want you to understand, that's all. Understanding is enough. Let understanding be the only law; there is no other. Don't move by fear, otherwise you will move in darkness. And don't move by greed – because greed is nothing but fear upside-down. They are two aspects of the same thing: on one side it is greed, on another side it is fear. A man who is fearful is always greedy, a man who is greedy is always fearful. They remain together, they go together.

Only understanding, only awareness, only the capacity to see into things as they are. Can't you accept existence as it is? And by not accepting it, nothing has been changed. What has been changed? For thousands of years we have been rejecting many things – they are still there, even more so.

Thieves have not disappeared. Neither have murderers disappeared. Nothing has changed; things are exactly as they have been always. Prisons go on increasing. Laws go on increasing and go on becoming more and more complicated. And because of the complicated laws, more and more thieves are employed – the lawyers, the judges....

It makes no change anywhere. Your whole prison system has not done any good – in fact it has been very very harmful. The prison system has become the very university for crime – to learn crime, to learn crime from MASTERS. Once a man goes to prison, he becomes a constant visitor. Once he has been into prison, then again and again he comes back. It is very rare to find a man who has been to prison and who never comes back again.

He comes out of prison more skillful. He comes out of prison with more ideas – how to do the same thing, now in a more expert way. He comes out of prison less amateurish. He comes out of prison with a degree; the prison is a kind of graduation – graduation into crime. Now he knows more, how

to do it better. Now he knows how not to get caught. Now he knows what the loopholes are in the law system.

And those who enforce law are as criminal as anybody else – in fact they have to be more criminal. They have to deal with criminals, so they have to be more criminal. The police and the prison-guards and the jailers, they are more criminal than the people they are forcing into imprisonment – they have to be. Nothing changes. This is not the way to change things, this has proved an utter failure. Zen says change comes through understanding, not by enforcing anything.

And what is your heaven and hell? Nothing but the same idea, transported beyond life. The same idea of prison becomes the idea of hell. And the same idea of reward – governmental rewards, presidential rewards, gold medals, this and that – that same idea becomes transported as heaven, paradise, FIRDAUS. But the psychology is the same.

Zen destroys that psychology from the very root. Z.n has no condemnation for anything. It has only understanding: it says try to understand things as they are. Try to understand man as he is – don't impose an ideal, don't say how he should be. The moment you say how man should be, you become blind to the reality that he is.

The 'should' becomes a barrier. Then you can't see the real, then you can't see that which is – your 'should' becomes too heavy. You have an ideal, a perfectionist ideal, and every man falls below it, naturally. Then every man is condemned.

And those egoistic people who can manage somehow to force themselves into these ideals – at least superficially, at least outwardly – they become great saints. They are nothing but great egoists. And if you look into their eyes, just one flavour you will find: holier-than-thou. They are the chosen few, they are the chosen people of God. And they are here to condemn you and to transform you.

Zen is not interested in anybody's transformation. AND it transforms – that is the paradox. It is not concerned with how you should be, it is only concerned with what you are. See into it, see into it with loving, caring eyes. Try to understand what it is. And out of this understanding, a transformation comes. And the transformation is natural – you have not to do it, it simply happens on its own accord.

Zen transforms, but it doesn't talk about transformation. It changes, but it is not concerned with change. It brings more beatitude to man than anything else, but it is not concerned with it at all. It comes as a grace, as a gift. It follows understanding. That is the beauty of Zen, it is unconditionally value-free. Valuation is the disease of the mind – that's what Zen says. Nothing is good and nothing is bad, things are just as they are. Everything is as it is.

In Zen a totally new dimension opens, the dimension of effortless transformation. The dimension of transformation that comes naturally, by clearer eyes, by clarity. By seeing into the nature of things more directly, without any hindrance of prejudices.

The moment you say a man is good, you have stopped looking at him. You have labelled him already; you have pigeon-holed him, you have categorized him. The moment you say 'this man is bad' how can you look into his eyes now any more? You have decided offhand, you are finished with this man. This man is no more a mystery. You have solved the mystery: you have written on it 'this is bad', 'this is good'. Now you will be behaving with these labels, and not the realities.

The good man can turn into bad, the bad man can turn into good. It is happening every moment – in the morning the man was good, by the evening he is bad, by the night he is again good. But now you will behave according to the labelling. You will not be talking to the man himself, you will be talking to your own label, to your own image.

Of course, you go on missing realities, real persons. And it creates a thousand and one complexities and problems. Unsolvable problems. Do you talk to your wife really? When you are in bed with your wife, are you really in bed with your wife, or with a certain image?

This is my feeling – that wherever two persons are meeting, there is a crowd really, not two persons. At least four persons certainly are there. Your image of the other and the other's image of you, those two images are there. And they never fit – the real person goes on changing, the real person is a flux. The real person is a river, it goes on changing its colour.

The real person is ALIVE! The day you label the person he has not gone dead, he is still alive.

Once somebody asked Chuang Tzu, 'Is your work finished?' He said, 'How can it be finished? – because I am still alive!' See into it: he says, 'How can it be finished? I am still alive. It can only be finished the day I am dead. I am still flowing, things will still go on happening.'

When a tree is alive, flowers will come, new leaves will come, new birds will come and make their nests on it, new travellers will come and stay overnight under it... things will go on changing.

Everything remains possible when you are alive. But the moment you label a man as good, bad, moral, immoral, religious, irreligious, theist, atheist, this and that – you are thinking as if the man has become dead. You should label only when a certain person is dead. You can label him on the grave, not before it. You can go to the grave and you can write: This Man is This. Now he cannot deny you; now things have finished, things have come to a stop. The river flows no more.

But while a man is alive.... And we go on labelling even children, small children. We say, 'This child is very obedient, and this child is very disobedient. And this child is such a joy, and this child is such a problem.' You label. And remember, when you label you create many problems. First, if you label somebody you help him to behave the way you label him – because he starts feeling that now he is under an obligation to prove that you are right.

If the father says, 'My child is a problem,' now the child thinks, 'I have to prove that I am a problem, otherwise my father will be proved wrong.' This is a very unconscious reasoning – how can a child prove his father wrong? So he creates more problems. And the father says, 'Look. He is a problem.'

Three women were talking about their children. And, as women talk, they were bragging about their children. One said, 'My child is only five years old, but he writes poetry. And such beautiful poetry that even accomplished poets will feel ashamed.'

And the second said, 'This is nothing. My child is only four, and he paints – such modern, ultra-modern paintings, even Picasso cannot make any head or tail of it, what it is. And he does not use a brush, he simply uses his hands. And sometimes he simply throws the paint on the canvas and a beautiful thing, something out of the blue, arises. My child is an impressionist, a very original painter.'

The third woman said, 'This is nothing. My child is only three, and he goes to the psychoanalyst by himself.'

If you label, you will manage... you will destroy. All labels are destructive. Never label a person as a sinner or a saint. When too many people label a person in one way.... And people tend to think collectively; people don't have individual original ideas. Mm? you hear a rumour that somebody is a sinner, and you accept it. And then you hand it over to somebody else, and he accepts it. And the rumour goes on growing, and the label becomes bigger and bigger and bigger. And one day, on that man 'The Sinner' is written in such big capital letters, in such neon signs, that he reads it himself and he has to behave accordingly. The whole society expects him to be that way, otherwise people will be very angry – 'What are you doing? You are a sinner, and trying to be a saint! Behave yourself!

That's what the society has – a very subtle involvement in its labelling: 'Behave yourself! Don't do anything that goes against our ideas of you.' That is a very tacit thing, but it is there.

Secondly, when you label a person, howsoever he tries to behave according to the label, he cannot. He cannot do it perfectly, it is impossible. It cannot be done really, he can only pretend. And then some times or others when he is not pretending, when he is a little relaxed – he is in a holiday mood and he is on a picnic – the reality asserts. Then you think you have been deceived; this man is a deceiver. You were thinking he is good, and today he has stolen money from you. And for years you have been thinking he is good, he is a saint – and now he has stolen money from you.

You think he has deceived you? No, it is your labelling that has deceived you. He is moving according to his reality. Enough he tried to fit within your frame – but one day or other one grows out of the frame. One has to do things one wants to do.

Nobody is here to fulfill your expectations. And only very cowardly people try to fulfill others' expectations. A real man will destroy all people's expectations about him, because he is not here to be imprisoned by anybody's ideas. He will remain free. He will remain inconsistent – that is what freedom is. He will do one thing today, and he will do something exactly opposite tomorrow – so that you cannot carry an idea about him.

A real, genuine man is inconsistent. Only bogus people are consistent. A real, genuine man carries contradictions within himself. He is utter freedom. He is such a freedom that he can be this and he can be that too, just the opposite too. It is his choice – if he wants to be a leftist he is a leftist, if he wants to be a rightist he becomes a rightist. There is no hindrance in him. If he wants to be inside he can be inside, if he wants to be outside he can be outside. He is free. He can be an extrovert, he can be an introvert, he can do whatsoever. His freedom chooses in the moment what to do.

But we force a pattern on people that they should be consistent. There is great value put on consistency. We say, 'This man is so consistent. This man is great – he is so consistent.' But what do you mean by 'consistency'? 'Consistency' means 'This man is dead, he lives no more.' He has stopped the day he has become consistent – since then he has not lived.

When you say, 'My husband is trustworthy,' what do you mean? He has stopped loving, he has stopped living – now no other woman attracts him. If no other woman attracts him, how can you go

on attracting him? – you are a woman. In fact, now he pretends. If the man is still living and loving, when he sees a beautiful woman he is attracted. When a woman is living and alive and kicking, when she sees a beautiful man, how is it that she will not feel attracted? It is so natural! I am not saying she has to go with him – but the attraction is natural. She may choose not to go – but to deny the attraction is to deny life itself.

Zen says: Remain true to your freedom. And then a totally different kind of being arises in you, which is very unexpected, unpredictable. Religious, but not moral. Not immoral – amoral: beyond morality, beyond immorality.

This is a new dimension that Zen opens into life. It is altogether a separate reality in which you have lived – this is totally separate from that. It has a new quality; the quality is that of characterlessness.

Sometimes this word hurts very much, because we have loved the word 'character' too long. We have been conditioned for centuries for the word 'character'. We say, 'That man is a man of character.' But have you watched? A man of character is a dead man. A man of character is categorizable, the man of character is predictable. The man of character has no future, has only the past.

Listen to it: The man of character has only his past. Because character means the past. He goes on repeating his past, he is a broken gramophone record. He goes on repeating the same thing again and again and again. He has no more anything new to say. He has nothing new to live, he has nothing new to be. We call that man a man of character. You can rely on him, you can depend on him – he will not break his promises. Yes, that is true. He has great utility, the social utility is great – but that man is dead, that man is a machine.

Machines have characters; you can depend on them. That's why we are going to remove, by and by, all men and replace them by machines. Machines are more predictable, they have greater characters – you can depend on them.

A horse is not so dependable as a car. A horse has a kind of personality – some day he is not in the mood, and some day he does not want to go the way you want to go, and some day he is very rebellious. And some day he simply stands there and will not move. He has a soul; you cannot always depend on him. But a car has no soul. It is just put together; it has no center. It simply goes the way you want it to go. Even if you want the car to go beyond the cliff, it will go. The horse will say, 'Wait. If you want to commit suicide, you commit – I am not taking it. You can jump. I am not jumping.' But the car will not say no, it has no soul to say no. It never says yes, it never says no.

Sometimes even the mind of a great mathematician simply won't work. But the computer goes on working twenty-four hours – day in, day out, year in, year out – there is no question of not working.

A machine has character, very dependable character. And that's what we have been trying to do – first we tried to make man a machine. We could not succeed in it a hundred percent, so by and by we started to invent machines so that they can replace man. Sooner or later, man will be replaced everywhere. Machines will do far better, far more efficiently, more reliably, faster.

Man has moods, because man has a soul. Because man has a soul, man can only be authentic if he remains without a character. What do I mean when I say 'characterless'? I mean the man goes

on dropping his past. He does not live according to his pact – that's why he is unpredictable. He lives moment to moment, he lives in the present. He looks around and he lives, he sees around and he lives, he feels around and he lives. He has no fixed ideas how to live; he has only awareness. His life remains a constant flow. He has spontaneity – that's what I mean when I say a real man is characterless. He has spontaneity.

He is responsive. If you say something to him, he responds to it, he does not repeat a cliche. He responds to you, to this moment, to THIS question, to THIS situation. He is not responding to some other LEARNED situation. He responds to you, he looks into you. He is not reacting, he is responding; a reaction comes out of the past.

It happened: A Zen master asked, 'What is the secret of Buddha? What did he deliver to Mahakashyapa when he gave him the flower? Why did he say, "I give to Mahakashyapa what I have not been able to give to anybody else – because others can understand only words, Mahakashyapa can understand silence"?'

Buddha had come that day with a lotus flower in his hand. All his disciples looked and looked, and they were worried and they started getting more and more restless. He would not say anything, he was going continuously into the lotus. He was looking at the lotus... as if he had forgotten the whole assembly.

Minutes passed, and the hour was passing, and then people were very fidgety. And then Mahakashyapa started laughing. And Buddha called him and he gave the flower to him and he said, 'What I can give through words, I have given to others. What I cannot give through words, I give it to you, Mahakashyapa. Keep it till you find a man who can receive the message in silence.'

A Zen master asked his disciples, 'What was the secret? What was given through the lotus? What happened in that moment?' A disciple stood, danced, ran out. And the master said, 'Right. Exactly this is what it is. '

But another master in the same monastery came to see this master in the night and said, 'You should not agree so soon; your agreement was too early. I suspect.'

So the master went to the disciple who had danced and to whom he had said, 'Yes, this is it.' In the night he went there and he asked the same question again: 'What was it that Buddha gave in the lotus to Mahakashyapa? What was it that Mahakashyapa understood when he smiled? What was it? Tell me the answer.'

And the young man danced. And the master hit him hard. And he said, 'This is wrong, absolutely wrong.' And the disciple said, 'But just in the morning you said it was right.' And the master said, 'Yes. In the morning it was right, in the night it is wrong. You are repeating. In the morning I thought it was a response. Now I know it was a reaction.'

The answer has to change, if it is a response, each time the question is put. The question may be the same, but nothing else is the same. In the morning the sun was rising and the birds were singing, and the assembly, and a thousand monks were sitting in meditation – it was a totally different kind of world. And the master asked....

Yes, the question is the same, the linguistic formulation is the same. But the whole has changed, the gestalt has changed. In the night it is totally different, the master is alone with the disciple in his cell. The sun is no more there in the sky, and birds are no more singing, and there is nobody else to see. The master has changed. These few hours, the river has flowed, has entered into new pastures, has entered into new territories. The question only APPEARS as the same. But the disciple got fixed. He thought, 'So I know the answer.'

No, in real life nobody knows the answers. In real life you have to be responsive. In real life you cannot carry answers ready-made, fixed, cliches. In real life you have to be open. That disciple missed. A characterless man is a man who has no answers, who has no philosophy, who has no particular idea how things should be. Howsoever they are, he remains open. He is a mirror – he reflects.

Have you not watched? If you go before the mirror, if you are angry the mirror reflects your angry face, if you are laughing the mirror reflects your laughing face. If you are old the mirror reflects your old age, if you are young the mirror reflects your youth. You cannot say to the mirror, 'Yesterday you reflected me laughing, and today you are reflecting me so angry and sad? What do you mean? You are inconsistent. You don't have any character! I will throw you out of the house.'

The mirror has no character. And the real man is like a mirror.

Zen is non-judgemental, Zen is non-evaluative, Zen imposes no character on anybody. Because to impose character, you will need valuation – good and bad. To impose character you will have to make shoulds and should-nots; you will have to give commandments. To impose character you will have to be a Moses – you cannot be a Bodhidharma.

To impose character you will have to create fear and greed. Otherwise who will listen to you? You will have to be a B. F. Skinner and treat people like rats – train them, punish them, reward them, so that they are forced into a certain pattern. That's what has been done to you. Your parents have done it, your education has done it, your society, state, has done it.

Zen says: Now it is enough, get out of it. Drop all this nonsense, start being yourself. That does not mean that Zen leaves you in chaos. No, just the opposite. Zen, instead of giving you a character, and a conscience to manipulate the character, gives you consciousness.

This difference has to be noted, remembered. All other religions give you conscience. Zen gives you consciousness. Conscience means, 'This is good, that is bad. Do this, don't do that.' Consciousness simply means, 'Be a mirror: reflect, respond.' Response is right, reaction is wrong. To be responsible does not mean to follow certain rules; to be responsible means to be capable of response.

Zen makes you luminous from within. Not an imposition from the outside, not cultivation from the outside; it does not give you an armour, a defence-mechanism. It does not bother about your periphery, it simply creates a lamp inside at your center, at your very center. And that light goes on growing... and one day your whole personality is luminous.

How did this Zen attitude, this approach, arise? It arose out of meditation. It is the ultimate peak of a meditative consciousness. If you meditate, by and by you will see – everything is good, everything

is as it should be. TATHATA, suchness, arises. Then, seeing a thief you don't think that he should be transformed – you simply respond. Then you don't think that he is bad. And when you don't think about a man that he is bad, evil, you are creating a possibility for the man to be transformed. You are accepting the man as he is. And through that acceptance is transformation.

Have you watched it happen in your life too? Whenever somebody accepts you utterly, unconditionally, you start changing. His acceptance gives you such courage.... When there is somebody who simply loves you as you are, have you not seen the miracle happening that something changes, immediately starts changing, fast? The very acceptance that you are loved as you are – nothing is expected of you – gives you soul, makes you integrated, makes you confident, gives you trust. Makes you feel that you ARE. That you need not fulfill expectations, that you can BE, that your original being is respected.

Even if you can find a single person who respects you utterly – because all judgement is disrespect – who accepts you as you are, who does not make any demand on you, who says, 'Be as you are. Be authentically yourself. I love you. I love you, not what you do. I love you as you are in your self, your innermost core; I am not worried about your periphery and your clothes. I love your being – not what you have. I am not concerned with what you have, I am concerned only with one thing – what you are. And you are tremendously beautiful'....

That's what love is. That's why love is such nourishment. When you can find a woman or a man who simply loves you – for no reason at all, just for love's sake... and love transforms. Suddenly you are another person you have never been. Suddenly the sadness has disappeared, the dullness gone. Suddenly you find a dance in your step, a song in your heart. You start moving in a different way – a grace arises.

Watch it: whenever somebody loves you, the very phenomenon of love is enough. Your coldness disappears, you start warming up. Your heart is no more indifferent towards the world. You look at flowers more, you look at the sky more – the sky has a message... because a woman has looked into your eyes, or a man has looked into your eyes, and has accepted you utterly, with no expectation.

But this does not last, because man is so foolish. This honeymoon, sooner or later, disappears – a week, two weeks, three weeks at the most. And sooner or later the woman starts expecting and the man starts expecting, 'Do this. Don't do that.' And again you are pulled back, you are no more in the sky. Again you are burdened, love has disappeared. Now the woman is more interested in your purse. Now the man is more interested in his food. Arranging the family, arranging the house, and a thousand and one details – but you are no more in tune with each other's being.

If that harmony remains, then everything is okay. You can go on doing a thousand and one things, nothing is disturbed. But that harmony is lost; you start taking each other for granted. Within those three weeks you have labelled each other. The day your labelling is complete, the honeymoon is over.

When it happens in ordinary love so much, what to say about a master, when you fall in love with a master? and who loves you utterly, as you are. That love is therapeutic, that love is a healing energy. Hence I insist for sannyas – because unless you are a sannyasin you will not come close enough to me to receive my love. You will remain afraid, you will remain defensive. You will remain a little far away, so that you can escape if the time arises.

Unless you are a sannyasin, unless you drop all your defenses, you will not be able to receive my love. And the moment you start receiving my love, you have started changing. In fact nothing else is needed, just this will do. This is enough, more than enough. Love is such a miraculous energy.

Zen believes in love. It does not believe in rules, regulations. It does not believe in any outer discipline, it believes in the inner. It comes out of love, it comes out of respect, out of trust. When you meditate, you start trusting existence. See the difference: if you ask a Christian or a Hindu, trust is the first demand. He says, 'Trust existence – then you will know what God is.' In Zen, that is not the first demand. Zen says: Meditate. Out of meditation trust arises, and trust makes existence divine. Tathata arises.

How can you go on condemning if you know everything is God? The so-called vedantins in India say 'All is Brahma' – but still they go on condemning. Still they go on saying that you are a sinner and that that one is a saint, and the saint will go to heaven and the sinner will go to hell. This seems very absurd, if all is God. Then how can you be a sinner? Then it is God who is a sinner in you. And how can God go to hell?

Zen says: The day you know all is divine, all is God. And they don't use the word 'god' at all – because the other religions have corrupted the word so badly, contaminated it, polluted it, poisoned it. They don't use the word 'god'. When you meditate, and by and by you start seeing things as they are, and you start trusting and respecting things as they are, a trust arises. That trust is tathata – suchness.

Tathata leads to a vision of the interrelatedness of existence. Then the whole universe is one unit, functioning in an organic unity. They have a particular word for it, they call it 'JIJI MUGE HOKKAI': when you come to know that the whole existence is unitary – it is really a universe, not a multiverse – that everything is joined with everything else; that sinners and saints all alike are part of one net, they are not separate; that good and bad are joined together. Just as dark and light are joined together, just as death and life are joined together, so are good and bad.

Everything is interconnected. It is a web, a beautiful pattern.

Listen to these words of Berenson. 'It was a morning in early summer. A silver haze shimmered and trembled over the lime trees. The air was laden with a caress. I remember... that I climbed a tree-stump and felt suddenly immersed in itness. I did not call it by that name; in that state of mind there was no word. It was not even a feeling. I had no need for words. It and I were one. Simply it was there, a benediction.'

TATHATA means coming to a moment when you suddenly see that existence is one, interrelated, dancing in one dance, an orchestra. And all is needed – the bad is as much needed as the good. Ramana is as much needed as Rama. Jesus alone won't do, Judas is a must. Without Judas, Jesus will not be so rich. Cut Judas out of the Bible and the Bible loses much. Drop Judas out of the Bible and where is Jesus? and what is Jesus? Judas gives contrast; he creates the background. He becomes the dark cloud in which Jesus becomes a silver lining. Without the dark cloud there are no silver linings.

Jesus must feel thankful for ever and for ever to Judas. And it is no accident that when he washed the feet of his disciples, the first feet he washed were those of Judas. Then when he was taking leave,

saying goodbye, he hugged Judas more than anybody else, he kissed Judas more than anybody else. He was his foremost disciple.

Now, this is a mystery behind a mystery. There are rumors in esoteric circles, down the ages, that it was all planned by Jesus himself. Gurdjieff believed in that very much. And there is every possibility that Judas was simply following orders from Jesus – to betray him, to go and sell him to the enemies. And that looks more logical. Because howsoever bad the man Judas may have been, just to sell Jesus for thirty rupees?... seems too much. And Judas had been with Jesus long, and he was the most intelligent disciple of all. He was the only educated one, he was the only one who can be called an intellectual. In fact he was more knowledgeable than Jesus himself. He was the pundit around Jesus.

It seems too much, just for thirty silver coins selling Jesus. No. And do you know what happened? When Jesus was crucified, Judas committed suicide – the next day. Christians don't talk about that much, but it has to be talked about. Why did he commit suicide? Finished is his work – he should go with the master. A man who can sell his master for thirty rupees, can you think of him feeling so guilty that he should commit suicide? Impossible. Why should he bother? No, he had simply followed an order from the master. He could not say no – that was part of surrender. He had to say yes.

If some day I tell you, 'Kill me,' you have to say yes. That is what surrender is. 'No' cannot be said to the master.

It was planned. There is a reason in it: it is only through the crucifixion that Jesus' message has lived in the world. There would have been no Christianity without the crucifixion. That's why I call Christianity 'crossianity'. It is not Christianity – because just Christ won't do, the cross was needed for it to happen.

When you see the interrelatedness of things, then Judas also becomes part of the game Jesus is. Then the bad is part of the good. Then the Devil is nobody but an angel of God – and I don't call him a fallen angel. Maybe on a great mission in the world, sent from God himself – maybe his closest disciple.

The word 'devil' comes from 'divine'. That is very indicative. Yes, the Devil is also divine.

Sasaki relates: When my teacher was speaking to me about this, about this TATHATA, he said, 'Now think about yourself. You think you are a separate being, an island. But you are not. Without your father and mother you would not be. Without their fathers and mothers they would not have been and you would not be.'

And so on, so forth – you can go to the very beginningless beginning. You can go on moving backwards, and you will find everything that has happened in existence up to now, had to happen for you to happen. Otherwise you would not happen. You are so interconnected. You are just a small part of a long infinite chain. All that is involved in you, all that has passed is involved in you. You are the apex, at this moment, of all that has preceded you. In you the whole past exists. But this is not all. From you will come your children, and their children's children... and so on, so forth.

From your actions will come the resulting actions, and from the resulting actions other results, and from other results other actions. You will disappear, but whatsoever you do will continue. It will have reverberations, down the ages, to the very end.

So the whole past is involved in you, and the whole future too. At this moment the past and future meet in you, ad infinitum, in both the directions. You hold within you the seed from which the future will arise, just as much as you at this moment are the entirety of the past. So you are the entirety of the future too. This moment is all, you are all. Because the whole is involved in you, the whole is at stake in you. The whole criss-crosses you.

They say: You touch a blade of grass and you have touched all the stars. Because everything is involved in everything else, everything is inside everything else. Zen calls this involvement of the whole into each of its parts JIJI MUGE HOKKAI.

'It is illustrated by the concept of a universal net. The net is called "Indra's Net", a great net extending throughout the universe, vertically to represent time, horizontally to represent space. At each point where the threads of the net cross one another is a crystal bead, the symbol of a single existence. Each crystal bead reflects on its shining surface not only every other bead in the net but every reflection of every other reflection of every other bead upon each individual bead.'

Countless endless reflections of one another. This is called JIJI MUGE HOKKAI.

When Gautam Buddha held the single lotus in his hand, he was showing this JIJI MUGE HOKKAI. Mahakashyapa understood it. This was the message – that in this small lotus all is involved: the whole past, the whole future, all dimensions are involved. In this small lotus, everything has flowered, and everything else that will EVER flower is contained in this small lotus flower. Mahakashyapa laughed; he understood the message: JIJI MUGE HOKKAI. That's why the flower was given to Mahakashyapa, as a token of transmission beyond words.

Hence the Buddhist compassion for all, and gratitude for all, and respect for all – because everything is involved in each other.

Now this story.

ONE EVENING AS SHICHIRI KOJUN WAS RECITING SUTRAS A THIEF WITH A SHARP SWORD ENTERED, DEMANDING EITHER HIS MONEY OR HIS LIFE.

SHICHIRI TOLD HIM: 'DO NOT DISTURB ME. YOU CAN FIND THE MONEY IN THAT DRAWER.' THEN HE RESUMED HIS RECITATION.

No condemnation, no judgement. Simple acceptance – as if a breeze has come in, not a thief. Not even a slight change in his eyes – as if a friend has come, not a thief. No change in hi. attitude. He says, 'DO NOT DISTURB ME. YOU CAN FIND THE MONEY IN THAT DRAWER. Can't you see I am reciting my sutras? At least you should be that much respectful, not to disturb a man who is reciting his sutras, for such a foolish thing as money. You go and find it yourself! And don't disturb me.'

Now see: he is not against the thief because he has come to steal. He is not against the thief because he is after money, obsessed with money – no, nothing of the sort. A simple acceptance: this is the way he is. And who knows? this is the way he HAS to be. And why should I condemn? Who am I? If he can be kind enough not to disturb me, that is enough, that is more than enough to expect from somebody else. So don't disturb me.

A LITTLE WHILE AFTERWARDS HE STOPPED AND CALLED: 'DON'T TAKE IT ALL. I NEED SOME TO PAY TAXES WITH TOMORROW.'

See the point – so friendly. There is no enmity in it. And because there is no enmity, there is no fear in it. Because there is no condemnation, such deep respect, he can trust that he will leave. When you are giving so wholeheartedly, you can trust – even the worst of men will at least have respect for your respect towards him. He will respect, you can trust. When you trust somebody, when you don't judge and don't condemn, you can trust that he will trust you. He simply said:

'DON'T TAKE IT ALL. I NEED SOME TO PAY TAXES WITH TOMORROW.'

THE INTRUDER GATHERED UP MOST OF THE MONEY AND STARTED TO LEAVE. 'THANK A PERSON WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GIFT.'

Now, see the compassion of the man. He does not call it theft; he says, 'Thank a man when you receive a gift.' He is transforming; his vision is totally different. He does not want this man to feel guilty; his compassion is tremendous. Otherwise later on he will start feeling guilty. He was bound to feel guilty – stealing from a poor monk, a poor beggar, who had not much in the first place stealing from a man who was so readily ready to give, I who accepted you so totally – this man will feel guilty, this man will start repenting. He will not be able to sleep back home. He may have to come back in the morning to be forgiven.

No, that will not be good. Zen does not want to create guilt in any way. That's what Zen is all about, a religion without creating any guilt. A religion can be very easily created with guilt, that's what other religions have done. But when you create guilt you have created something far worse than you were going to cure. Zen does not create any guilt, takes every care not to create any guilt in anybody.

Now he says, 'THANK A PERSON WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GIFT. This is a gift! Don't you know even this much? I am GIVING it to you – you are not stealing it from me.' What a difference! It is the same thing.

This is what Zen says: Give – rather than it being snatched away. And this is the total vision about life. Before death comes give everything so death need not feel guilty. Give your life to death as a gift. This is the Zen renunciation. It is altogether different from Hindu or Catholic renunciation – they give in order to get. Zen gives in order so that no guilt is created anywhere in the world; no guilt is left behind.

SHICHIRI ADDED, 'THANK A PERSON WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GIFT' THE MAN THANKED HIM AND MADE OFF.

A FEW DAYS AFTERWARDS THE FELLOW WAS CAUGHT AND CONFESSED, AMONG OTHERS, THE OFFENCE AGAINST SHICHIRI. WHEN SHICHIRI WAS CALLED AS A WITNESS

HE SAID: 'THIS MAN IS NO THIEF, AT LEAST AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED. I GAVE HIM THE MONEY AND HE THANKED ME FOR IT.'

You see the point? How respectful! What immense respect! What unconditional respect towards a man – towards a thief!

If this Shichiri was a Christian saint, he would have threatened him to be ready to suffer hell – and hell for eternity. If he was a Hindu saint, he would have preached him a long sermon on no-theft, and he would have made him very frightened that he will be thrown into hellfire. And he would have painted a very nightmarish picture of hell. And he would have preached the uselessness of money.

Look: the Zen master does not say anything about the uselessness of money. In fact, instead he says, 'Leave a little for me; in the morning I will need it.'

Money has a purpose. One need not be obsessed, this way or that, for or against. Money is utilitarian. You need not be only living FOR money, and you need not be against money. It is just utilitarian. That's why my attitude towards money is: Money has to be used. It is very very instrumental.

In the world of religion, money is condemned very much – the religious people are very much afraid of money. That fear is nothing but the greed standing on its head. It is the same greed which has now become afraid.

If you go to Acharya Vinoba Bhave with money in your hand he will close his eyes. He closes his eyes, he will not look at the money. So much fear of money? Why should you close the eyes? And he goes on saying that money is dirt – but he never closes his eyes when he looks at dirt. This is very illogical. In fact, if money is dirt he should have to keep his eyes closed twenty-four hours, because dirt is everywhere. Money is dirt? Then why be so afraid of dirt? What is the fear?

Zen has a totally different and a very fundamental approach. The master does not say that money is dirt and you should not be looking for other people's money. What does it have to do with people? Money is nobody's. So to say to somebody, 'You are a thief,' is to believe in private property. Is to believe that somebody can have it rightly and somebody can have it wrongly, somebody has the RIGHT to own it and somebody has no right.

Stealing is condemned because of the capitalist mind in the world; it is part of the capitalist mind. The capitalist mind says money belongs to somebody – there is a right owner, and nobody should take it away.

But Zen says nothing belongs to anybody, nobody is the right owner. How can you own this world? You come into this world empty-handed, you go out of it empty-handed – you cannot own it. Nobody owns it; we use it. And we are all together here to use it. That is the message: 'Take the money! but leave a little for me too. I am also here to use it, as much as you are here to use it.'

Such a practical, such an empirical attitude! And so free of money! And in the court he said, 'THIS MAN IS NO THIEF...' he has turned this thief into a friend. He says '... AT LEAST AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED. I don't know about others – how can I know about others? This much I know: I gave

him the money and he thanked me for it. It is finished, accounts are closed. He does not owe it to me any more. He has thanked me for it – what else can one do?’

At the most we can thank. We can thank God for all that he has given us – what else can we do?

AFTER HE HAD FINISHED HIS PRISON TERM, THE MAN WENT TO SHICHIRI AND BECAME HIS DISCIPLE.

What else can you do with such a man as Shichiri? You have to become a disciple. He has converted a thief into a sannyasin. This is the alchemy of a master, he never misses any opportunity. Whatsoever opportunity is there, he uses it – even if a thief comes to a master, he will return a sannyasin.

To come in contact with a master is to be transformed. You may have come for something else, you may not have come for the master at all – the thief was not there for the master. In fact, had he known that in this hut lives a master, he would not have dared at all. He had come only for the money; he had stumbled upon the master by accident. But even if you meet a Buddha by accident, it is going to change you utterly. You will never be the same man again.

Many of you are here just by accident. You were not searching for me, you were not seeking for me. By a thousand and one accidents you have arrived here. But it becomes more and more difficult to go.

A master does not preach, he never says what should be done. Bodhidharma says, 'Zen has nothing to say, but Zen has much to show.' This master showed a way to this thief. He changed this man, and he changed him with such skill. He must have been a great surgeon – he operated on this man's heart... and no sound was heard. He destroyed this man utterly, and he created this man again. And the man was not even aware what had happened. This is what the miracle of a master is.

A Zen sutra says: 'The man of understanding does not reject error.' When I came across it, my heart danced. Recite this sutra in the deepest core of your heart: The man of understanding does not reject error.

And another master, speaking on the sutra, commented – his name was Ohasama – he commented: 'Truth does not need to be sought first, for it is present everywhere, even in error. Hence who rejects error rejects truth.'

Tremendous these people are! One who rejects error rejects truth. Do you see the beauty of it? The radical, the revolutionary, standpoint of it? Shichiri did not reject the man because he was a thief; he does not reject the man because of his error – because behind that error is a divine existence, a god. Reject the error, and you reject the god too. Reject the error, and you reject the truth that is hidden behind it.

He accepts the error in order to accept the truth. Once the truth arises, is accepted, spreads, the error will disappear on its own accord. You need not fight with darkness – that is the meaning. Simply light a candle. You need not fight with darkness, just light a candle. The master lighted a candle in the man.

Exactly the same, but a little more Zen, there is another story out another master – almost the same, but still more Zenish.

One midnight when Master Taigan was writing a letter a thief came into his room carrying a big naked sword. Looking at the thief, the master said, 'Which do you want – money or my life?'

Now, this is more Zen – he does not give a chance to the thief to say anything. Shichiri at least gave him the chance; with Shichiri the thief asked: A thief with a sharp sword entered into Shichiri's room DEMANDING EITHER HIS MONEY OR HIS LIFE. Taigan has improved upon it. Maybe Taigan followed later on – he must have come across Shichiri's story. He does not give that much chance to the thief. He says to this thief, 'Which do you want – money or my life? Both are irrelevant – whatsoever you need, you can take. It is your choice.'

'I came for money,' replied the thief, a little afraid.

This man – he has never come across such a dragon – he says, 'What do you want? – money or my life?' And so ready to give: 'You can choose.' No condemnation, nothing of the sort. Even if he had chosen his life, Taigan would have given it.

All that has to be taken, it is better to give it. And one day or other even life will disappear – so why worry about it? Death is coming: let this thief enjoy a moment.

'I came for money,' replied the thief, getting a little bit afraid. The master took out his purse and handed it to the man, saying, 'Here it is!' The master then returned to writing his letter as if nothing had happened.

The thief began to feel ill at ease and left the room, over-awed. 'Hey! Wait a minute!' called the master. The thief stood back, shuddering. 'Why don't you shut the door?' said the master.

Days later, the thief was captured by the police and said, 'I have been robbing for years, but I have never been so terrified as when that Buddhist master called after me, "Hey! Wait a minute!" That man is very dangerous, and I have never been able to forget him. And the day I am released from the prison, I am going to that man. I never came across such a man – such quality! I held the naked sword in my hand, but that was nothing. He is the naked sword.'

Just these words – 'Hey! Wait a minute!' – and the thief said, 'I am still shuddering.'

When you come close to a master, he is going to kill you. How can you kill a master? Even if you have a naked sword, you cannot kill a master.

The master is going to kill you. And he kills in such subtle ways that you never become aware that you have been killed. You become aware only when you are reborn. Suddenly one day you are no more the same. Suddenly one day the old man is gone. Suddenly one day everything is fresh and new – birds are singing, and new leaves are growing in you. The stagnant river is flowing again, you are moving towards the ocean.

Another story.

A Zen master had been put into jail several times.... Now a step further! These Zen people are really eccentric people, mad people – but they do beautiful things.

A Zen master had been put into jail several times.... Now, it is one thing to forgive a thief, it is one thing not to think that he is bad, it is another thing to go to jail oneself. And not once, many times – for stealing small things from his neighbours. And the neighbours knew, and they were puzzled: Why does this man steal? and such small things. But the moment he would be out of prison he would steal again, and he would go back. Even the judges were worried. But they had to send him to jail, because he would confess. He would never say, 'I have not stolen.'

Finally the neighbours gathered together, and they said, 'Sir, don't steal any more. You are getting old, and we are ready to provide you with all that you need – all your necessities, whatsoever it is. You stop this! We are very much worried, and we are very sad. Why do you go on doing this?

And the old man laughed. And he said, 'I steal in order to get in with the prisoners, and bring them the inner message. Who will help them? Outside, for you prisoners, there are many masters. But inside the jail there is no master. Who will help them, you tell me? This is my way to get in and help those people. So when my punishment is over and I am thrown out, I have to steal something and go back again. I am going to continue this. And I have found there in jail such beautiful souls, such innocent souls – sometimes far MORE innocent....'

Once it happened, one of my friends became a governor of a state in India, and he allowed me to go into jails all over his state. And I went for years, and I was surprised. The people who are in jails are far more innocent than the politicians in New Delhi, than the rich people, than the so-called saints.

I know almost all the saints of this country. They are more cunning. I have found in the criminals such innocent souls.... I can understand this old Zen master's idea – of stealing, of getting caught, and bringing the message to them. 'I steal in order to get in with the prisoners and bring them the inner message.'

Zen has no value system. Zen only brings one thing into the world: understanding, awareness. Through awareness comes innocence. And innocence is innocent of good and bad, both. Innocence is simply innocence – it knows no distinction.

The last story. It is about Ryokan – the same master I was talking about a few days before, who burned the roof to save the bamboo shoot Ryokan was a great lover of children. As might be expected of such a character as he was, he himself was a child. He was the child Jesus speaks about. He was so innocent that it was almost unbelievable that a man can be so innocent. He had no cunning, no cleverness. He was so innocent that people used to think that he was a little mad.

He liked to play with children. He played hide-and-seek, he played tamari, hand-ball, too. One evening it was his turn to hide, and he hid himself well under a straw stack in the field. It was growing darker and the children, not being able to locate him, left the field.

Early in the following morning, a farmer came and had to remove the straw stack to begin his work. Finding Ryokan there, he exclaimed, 'Oh Ryokan-sama! What are you doing here?'

The master answered, 'Hush! Don't talk so loud, the children will find me.'

The whole night under that straw he is waiting for the children! Such innocence is Zen. And such innocence is divine. Such innocence knows no distinctions between good and bad, knows no distinctions between this world and that, knows no distinction between this and that. Such innocence is what suchness is.

And this suchness is the innermost core of religion.

CHAPTER 2

Selling Water by the River

22 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

Question 1

PEACE OF MIND CAN BE GAINED BY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WORLD, BY STILLING THE VORTICES OF THE MIND. BUT HOW MUCH INNER PEACE IS APPROPRIATE IN A WORLD THAT CONTAINS ATTICA, VIETNAM, JOHANNESBURG, BIAFRA, PAKISTAN AND SUB-SAHARA AFRICA?

The world contains Vietnam, Attica, and things like that, because the peace of mind is missing. The root cause is that man is not silent. Hence violence, all kinds of violence. Because of Vietnam and because of Attica, much peace of mind is needed. They are symptoms of something like cancer inside human consciousness. They are not diseases themselves, they are simply symptoms. And they cannot be cured directly – until and unless the root cause is cut absolutely, destroyed absolutely.

Man has lived in war, down the ages, always. Out of three thousand years, only seven hundred years were not of war – and not in one stretch. Sometimes for one day there was no war on the earth, sometimes for a few days; otherwise the war has continued.

War is the greatest thing that man has remained involved with. Destruction seems to be very very attractive; killing and murder seems to be the goal of the human mind. In three thousand years, man has fought five thousand wars. Vietnam is nothing new, it is as ancient as man. It is not something that is happening today, it has been always there – because man is ill.

And you ask me, HOW MUCH INNER PEACE IS APPROPRIATE...? As much as you can manage – the more you have, the better. Because only pools of peace will destroy the compulsive attraction

towards violence. Only pools of peace all over the world, many many Buddhas, will be able to create a new vibe, a new wave, a new consciousness, in which war becomes impossible – in which all energy moves in a creative way, all energy moves towards love.

So don't say... I understand the logic of it. The logic is, if man becomes very peaceful then he will not bother about Vietnam. I understand what you mean by your question. You mean, if people become very silent and very peaceful they won't care what is happening in the world around them, they will become indifferent. So how much peace is appropriate? – that's why you ask the question.

But try to understand. The war is not the disease itself. Peace is missing in the heart – hence the war exists. The war is a consequence: more peace, less war. If peace becomes predominant, war will disappear.

War cannot disappear by the efforts of people who call themselves pacifists. War cannot disappear because of Bertrand Russell. War cannot disappear because there are people who are against war – no. The people who are against war will create another war. You can see, if you have observed a pacifist-protest, you can see how war-like they are – shouting, screaming, protesting.... You can see in their faces they are dangerous people. They may call themselves pacifists, but they don't know what peace means. They are very argumentative, arrogant, ready to fight.

It almost always happens that a peace-protest becomes a battle-field between the police and the pacifists. The pacifist is not really the man of peace. He is against war. He is so much against war that he will be ready to go to war if that is needed. The cause changes, the war continues.

A man of peace is not a pacifist, a man of peace is simply a pool of silence. He pulsates a new kind of energy into the world, he sings a new song. He lives in a totally new way – his very way of life is that of grace, that of prayer, that of compassion. Whomsoever he touches, he creates more love-energy.

The man of peace is creative. He is not against war, because to be against anything is to be at war. He is not against war, he simply understands why war exists. And out of that understanding he becomes peaceful.

Only when there are many people who are pools of peace, silence, understanding, will the war disappear. But withdrawal is not the way to attain peace. You say, PEACE OF MIND CAN BE GAINED BY WITHDRAWAL... Never. Never has it been gained that way.

Withdrawal is escapist. Withdrawal can give you a kind of death, but not peace. Peace is very alive. Peace is more alive than war – because war is in the service of death, peace is in the service of life. Peace is very alive, vibrant, young, dancing.... Withdrawal? – that is the oldest way escavists have chosen. It is cheap. It gives a kind of peace – remember, I say 'a kind of peace' – the same kind as you see in a graveyard.

You can go to a Catholic monastery – there is a kind of peace, the same that exists in the graveyard. You can go to the Jaina monks and you will see a kind of peace – the same that exists in a graveyard. These people are dead! They have renounced life. The day you renounce life you renounce responsibility, you renounce all kinds of commitments. You renounce all possibilities to live, to relate, to love. They may not be fighting, but they are no more loving either.

So withdrawal will bring a peace which is warless, loveless. But what is the point? You have thrown the baby with the bath-water.

Love has to grow. The whole energy that goes into violence, fighting, struggle, war, has to be transformed into love. Peace in itself cannot be the goal. Peace can only be a means to more life, to more abundant life. Peace cannot be the end – just to be peaceful is meaningless, it leads nowhere. It will not satisfy you just to be peaceful – then what is the difference between being dead and peaceful?

Withdrawal brings a peace that is suicide. Yes, you go to the Himalayas, you live in a cave, you are peaceful – because there is no possibility to fight with anybody. You have not changed at all, you have only changed the circumstances. You are the same person. If circumstances arise, you will go to war, you will fight. You will become angry if somebody comes and insults you.

You may have lived for thirty years in a cave in the Himalayas and somebody comes and insults you, and you will be surprised that anger comes back. Thirty years won't help; the anger was waiting there for the right season. Now somebody has insulted – the spring has come, and the anger blooms. And in a single moment all those thirty years of withdrawal have disappeared.

The real test is in life. If you are really peaceful, then be in the marketplace – there is the real test of your peace. Be peaceful there. I am not for withdrawal, I am for transformation. I am not for renunciation, I am all for life-affirmation. Live life as totally as possible. Find out ways how to live it more peacefully, how to live it more meditatively, how to live it in a more divine way. But don't escape.

The escapist is a coward; he has no courage. He is closing his eyes because he has become too much afraid of the world. His logic is that of the ostrich. That is not very human; that is very very below human. That is a little bit stupid. Just by closing your eyes nothing changes; the world remains the same. You can believe that everything has changed, because you cannot see anything any more. Your house is on fire, and you can sit with closed eyes and you can believe that the house is not on fire and everything is okay. You can create a kind of auto-hypnosis – and of course you will not be disturbed. But open your eyes, and the house is on fire.

A real man of peace lives with the world, in the world, and yet is not OF it. He will do everything that he can do – if the house is on fire then he will do everything that he can do to put the fire off – and yet he will remain undisturbed, undistracted. He will remain unwavering.

That integration is what I call real peace. PEACE OF MIND CAN BE GAINED BY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WORLD... No, it has never been gained and it can never be gained... BY STILLING THE VORTICES OF THE MIND. No. By stilling the mind you can simply force the mind to be peaceful. It is a kind of repression.

The real peace does not come out of repression. The mind has not to be repressed, the mind has to be understood. Why is the mind so noisy? Why does it go on and on? Why? This whole phenomenon of the mind has to be understood with love, with compassion. Befriend your mind, don't be in a hurry to force peace on it. A forced peace is not a peace at all. And don't try to still it; stillness is not the real thing.

Silence is not stillness. Silence happens. Stillness is managed, stillness comes out of control. A man sits controlling his body in a yoga posture, forcing his attention somewhere – on Krishna, on Christ; repeating a mantra – aum, ram, anything – somehow managing, trying to manage to remain concentrated. This man is just creating a false substitute.

The real silence is not forced at all. The real silence comes out of understanding. You understand why the mind goes on making noise, you look into it, you watch it: Why? You go into its noises – they must have some message for you. You go into its dreams – even if they look absurd they must be conveying something from the unconscious to you. Just by cutting those messages you are not going to grow – because you are cutting your own unconscious. When you still your mind you are doing one thing: you are stilling your unconscious. You are saying, 'I don't want to hear.'

But the unconscious has something valuable to say to you. The whole of psychoanalysis is a proof for it, that the unconscious has something to convey. And the unconscious is more in tune with God than your so-called conscious. And the conscious tries to force the unconscious not to say anything.

No, no song will be born out of it. You can force a child to sit silently, out of fear. You can give him an electric shock, and you can tell him to sit silently otherwise more shocks will be given. And he will sit silently. But is this the silence you call peace? And he is boiling within, he is a volcano within, he is getting mad within. But he is sitting silently because of the electric shock.

That's what people do – they silence the mind by fasting. That is giving shocks to the mind. You say, 'Do this – otherwise I am going to fast. I will starve you. Do this – otherwise I am going to stand in the hot sun for twenty-four hours. Do this – otherwise I will stand in the freezing river the whole night.'

There have been sects – Christian, Hindu, Jaina, and a thousand others – sects of masochists. Sects who have been torturing their bodies like anything; neurotic people. If you torture too much you make the mind very afraid. The afraid mind becomes still. It says, 'Okay. I will keep quiet.' But can a song be born out of this quietude? Can there be a dance, can there be a celebration out of this forced silence? There cannot be.

That's why your saints miss songs. Your saints look sad, dull, dead. You will find dust in their eyes, not radiance. You will not find flowers blooming in their heart, no. No white lotuses grow in your so-called saints' hearts. They are just deserts – dead, dry, no juice flows.

I am not for it. That is not my cup of tea, I don't purchase it. And I would like you to understand very deeply, because people who go on the path always fall into this trap. It seems easier. Without understanding the mind, just force it. To understand seems to be a longer way. But there are no shortcuts.

The spiritual growth comes the harder way, the longer way. One has to go with the mind with deep understanding. Go on, layer by layer – with great patience the work has to be done. And with great playfulness the work has to be done.

And then one day, when you have understood all the messages of the mind, the mind becomes silent. Because there is nothing more to say. It has been heard; it has reached to the master. Then

the mind becomes silent on its own accord. It falls silent without any effort on your part, effortlessly falls into silence. Then silence has a beauty, then silence is a benediction.

Question 2

DOES HEALTHY SELF-AWARENESS NECESSARILY INVOLVE A RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT?

Awareness necessarily is followed by action. Awareness flowers into action. Otherwise awareness will be impotent.

And that's what commitment is. When you are aware, it transforms your life. This awareness does not remain just inside you – it is not a treasure of a miser, who never uses it, who simply hoards it. It starts flowing into your life. It becomes part of your each move, it illuminates your actions. Whatsoever you do will be totally different now, its quality will be different. If you love you will love in a totally new way, awareness will be there. Your love will no more be a fall. People fall in love. A man of awareness does not fall in love, a man of awareness rises in love. He goes higher, not lower.

Your so-called love is almost an illusion. The man of awareness has a different love arising in his heart which is not an illusion. Your so-called love is a bargain. You want to use the other person and the other wants to use you, so there is a mutual bargain – a contract. Neither you love him, nor he loves you. He loves himself, you love yourself. You use the other, he uses you.

This is a kind of settlement, adjustment. You call it love. These adjustments don't go very far, they cannot go very far. Sooner or later you are fed-up with the person, and he or she is fed-up with you. You have looked into each other, you have explored each other, and now there seems to be nothing new any more. So interest has waned, love starts disappearing. Then you tolerate at the most, because of past promises, because of past commitments. You have to carry it somehow.

That's what happens to all kinds of so-called marriages. It is not love, it was not love ever, it was a kind of deception. And the deception is created by chemical changes in your body. It is as chemical as taking a drug. Certain hormones, certain chemicals, are released in the bloodstream and you feel an illusion arising and you start seeing things which are not there.

When you fall in love with a woman you start seeing things in that woman which are not there. Nobody else is seeing them, only you. And the woman starts seeing things in you; your chemistries are helping each other. You are dreaming – dreaming with open eyes; it is a kind of daydream. Soon it will be shattered, soon the reality will assert.

The man of awareness does not fall in love, he rises in love. Only the man of awareness is capable of love, because he has found himself. Now love is no more a need, he can be happy alone. Remember, this is one of the indications of a man of awareness: he can be happy alone. His happiness is as perfect alone as when he is together with somebody else. His happiness no more depends on anybody else, his happiness is autonomous. Now he can share, now he can give. And he has too much, and it goes on flowing, and it goes on coming... and what is he going to do with it? He has to share it.

The man of awareness shares his love, the man of unawareness has no love to share. He simply pretends to give love, because deep down he wants love to be given to him. The man of unawareness wants to be loved really – hence he has to pretend 'I love you'.

Both are doing the same thing to each other. Both need love, they both miss love – they both are not yet capable of being alone and happy. They need somebody to be happy; they need some-body to depend on, to lean upon. So their love is a kind of bait so the fish is caught. But they are not interested in giving food to the fish. The bait is not food for the fish, it is a trap.

The man of awareness loves – not because he needs love, but because he has so much that he has to give. And love is like flowers – if you don't give it, it dies. Love is like flowers – in the morning they bloom, by the evening they are gone. Go on giving. You cannot hoard flowers, that is one of the most beautiful things about flowers. And that is one of the most dirty things about gold and silver, that gold and silver can be hoarded and flowers cannot be hoarded. You cannot hoard flowers. If you hoard them, if you lock them in a box, they will be dead.

I have heard an ancient parable....

A great king had three sons, and he wanted to choose one to be his heir. And it was very difficult, because all three were very intelligent, very courageous. And they all were twins, of the same age, so there way no way to judge; Whom should he choose? So he asked a great sage, and the sage suggested an idea.

And the king went home and he asked all the three sons to come. And he gave them each one bag of flower seeds, and told them that he was going for a religious pilgrimage – for a teerthayatra. 'It will take a few years – one, two, three, maybe more. And this is a kind of test for you. These seeds you will have to give back to me when I return. And whosoever protects them best will become my heir.' And he left for the pilgrimage.

The first son thought, 'What should I do with these seeds?' He locked them in an iron safe – because when the father comes he has to return them as they are.

The second son thought, 'If I lock them up just as my brother has done, these seeds will die. And a dead seed is not a seed at all. And my father may argue that "I had given you live seeds, there was a possibility for them to grow – but these seeds are dead; they cannot grow. So you are not returning the same thing to me as I have given to you."

So he went into the market and sold the seeds and kept the money. And he thought, 'When my father comes I will go to the market, purchase new seeds, and give him back better than the first.'

But the third was the best. He went back into the garden and threw the seeds all over the place.

After three years, when the father came back, the first son opened his safe. Those seeds were all dead, stinking. And the father said, 'What! These are the seeds I have given to you? They had the possibility to bloom into flowers and give great perfume – and these seeds are stinking. These are not my seeds!' And the son said, 'Father, they are the same seeds.' The father said, 'You are a materialist.'

He went to the second son. He rushed to the market, purchased seeds, came back home, and said, 'These are the seeds.' The father said, 'But these are not the same; these are not exactly the same. You are better than the first, but yet not as capable as I would like you to be. You are a psychologist.'

Yes, a little better than the body is the mind – a little better than the materialist is the person who believes in the mind.

He went to the third. With great hope, and fear too: 'What has he done?' And the third took him back into the garden and there were millions of plants blooming, millions of flowers all around. And the son said, 'These are the seeds you had given to me. Soon I will collect the seeds and give them back to you. Right now they are getting ready to be collected.'

The father said, 'You are the spiritualist. You are my heir. This is how one should behave with seeds.'

The mind can hoard, the mind can calculate – but that won't do. The hoarder will not understand life, and the calculating mind will also miss it. Only a creative mind can understand it. That is the beauty of flowers – they cannot be hoarded. They represent God: God cannot be hoarded. They represent love: love cannot be hoarded.

It is not just an accident that the flower has remained a symbol for love, down the ages, in all the countries, for all kinds of societies. It is not just an accident. Love is like a flower – when it starts blooming in you, you have to distribute, you have to share, you have to give. You have to find people to enjoy it. And when somebody receives your love you feel tremendously grateful to him. Otherwise that flower would have died – unknown, unappreciated.

And the more you give, the more love grows. If you go on giving, a day comes, you become a constant infinite source of love.

A man of awareness will love, but his quality of love will be totally different. It will be a different reality, it will move in a different dimension. He will act, because each awareness has to become an act. Awareness is a seed, and an act is the flowering of it.

You ask, DOES HEALTHY SELF-AWARENESS NECESSARILY INVOLVE A RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT? It necessarily becomes an act, hence it becomes commitment. A real religious man is a very committed man. But he is not committed to any ideology, remember. A Christian is committed to Christianity, a Hindu is committed to Hinduism. A nationalist is committed to his nation, a politician is committed to his party. No, a religious person has no such commitments. He is not committed to any nation, because a religious man knows there are no nations. He belongs to no nation.

The religious man is not committed to any party; he has none. The religious man is not committed to any ideology, creed, dogma; he has none. He is committed to God, he is committed to consciousness, he is committed to existence itself. He lives in God, he moves in God, he breathes in God, he loves in God, he dies in God. His commitment is God, his commitment is religiousness.

Yes, necessarily it involves commitment. The question arises because in the past the so-called religious people have proved very escapist. Once they become religious they escape, they run away, they are no more here. This escapism is not really a sign of authentic religiousness, it simply says they have not yet become aware. Otherwise they will bloom into actions.

And that's how it happens. When Mahavira was in search for truth he went to the forest. But when he found it he came back to the society. When Buddha was in search he went to the forest. When

he found it he came back to the society. One has to come back. Maybe when you are searching for it you may need a special situation, just to help you search. But when you have found it, necessarily you come back to human society. Then you have to share. You can search alone, but how can you share if there is nobody else to share with?

Question 3

OSHO, I AM A NEWCOMER HERE, AND I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I HEARD YOU USING WORDS LIKE 'BASTARD' ETCETERA. I CANNOT BELIEVE A SAINT USING SUCH WORDS. CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

I am not a saint. Drop that nonsense about me – I am not a saint! And I am happy that I am not. And beware: Never become a saint. Just to be plain ordinary human is enough.

The human mind is such, it lives in hierarchies. It has not only divided man into higher and lower, it has even divided words into higher and lower – BRAHMIN words and SUDRA words, good words and bad words, respectable words and disrespective words. This is sheer foolishness. All words are alike. The function of the word is to express something. All words that express something are good – only words that don't express anything are meaningless. And sometimes it happens, the words that you would not like are most expressive, because they come from the common man. And the common man is more expressive, down-to-earth. He does not know abstractions.

Now, 'bastard' goes directly, hits directly. Yes, I can move in a little more roundabout way – listen to this:

And today's story has a vicar alone on the first tee. He sees a fellow standing there and suggests they play together. After a couple of holes, the stranger tells the minister what he's doing wrong. As they play along, the vicar gets more advice – all of it good. The man of the cloth finishes the round, six strokes under his usual score. He thanks his golf partner, and the fellow says, 'That will be twenty-five dollars. I'm the pro here.' The vicar argues but to no avail. So he tells the pro to drop over to the rectory that evening to collect his fee. 'And when you come,' suggests the vicar, 'bring your mother and father. I'll marry them at the same time.'

Now, this is very roundabout – religious, but very round-about. I don't like that way. It has to be direct.

It happened, Aldous Huxley relates...

'At the time of the great Irish potato famine a century ago, a special prayer was composed for the recitation in all the churches of Ireland. The purpose of this prayer was to entreat the Almighty to check the ravages of the blight which was destroying the Irish potato crop. But from the outset the word "potato" presented a difficulty. Quite obviously, in the eyes of the Divine, it was too low, common and proletarian to be pronounced in a sacred place, and in front of God..."potato". The horribly vulgar part of potatoes had to be concealed in the decent obscurities of paraphrases, and consequently God was requested to do something about an abstraction, sonorously called the "succulent tuber". 'The sublime has soared up into the empyrean of the ludicrous.'

They could not use the word 'potato' in the church – it is so vulgar, common, proletarian, SUDRA, untouchable.

In similar circumstances, says Aldous Huxley, a Zen master might also have avoided the word 'potato' – not because it was too low, but because it was too conventional and respectable. Not 'succulent tuber' but plain monosyllabic 'spud' would have been his idea of a suitable alternative.

I trust Zen. My approach is Zen. I love all kinds of words which are expressive. And I don't make a hierarchy.

You will be surprised: The lower the word in the hierarchy, the better – because it hits directly. The common people are not roundabout; they don't deal in abstractions. They say what they want to say, they don't go into theories.

Now what nonsense! If there is some God he must have laughed. Succulent tuber? Can you eat a succulent tuber? What will you do with a succulent tuber? A potato is perfect. And a potato is so innocent.

But this has been the case. That's why, for centuries, people have been praying in languages they don't understand. In India people pray in Sanskrit, which is a dead language. Even the person who is praying does not understand what he is saying. For centuries in the West, people were praying in Greek and Latin, or Hebrew, Aramaic – languages which have disappeared. And this is still happening. Jainas go on praying in Prakrit, and Buddhists go on praying in Pali. Those languages no more exist, they are no more living languages. Nobody understands them – even the person who is using them does not understand them.

What kind of prayer is this? But there is a point in it: Because those languages have disappeared, they have become very far away, unearthly, abstract – you can deal easily with them. They don't look common, they look special. If you are talking to God in the language you understand, it looks too common. It looks too ordinary, irreligious. This is the language you use with other human beings – how can you use the same language with God? It is difficult; then you pull God down to your own level. But what is wrong in that?

God has to be pulled down – only then can there be a communication. Either he has to pull you up, or you have to pull him down – but communication is possible only when you both exist on the same plane.

This continues because a subtle ego is involved in it. You need not get shocked. And if you love being shocked, wait a little more. I will be giving you more shocks.

You say, I AM A NEWCOMER... obviously... AND I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I HEARD YOU USING WORDS LIKE 'BASTARD' ETCETERA. Good. That shows that you are alive: you can be shocked. There are a few people who cannot even be shocked, they are so dead. Then something is possible; then something can be stirred in you. Then at least while I am talking you remain alert, you don't fall asleep.

... AND I CANNOT BELIEVE A SAINT USING SUCH WORDS. You must be having a certain idea about what a saint is. If you have any kind of ideas about a saint, they are going to be destroyed.

Here, at least, you will not be allowed to carry those ideas. I am an iconoclast. My whole effort here is to destroy ideals, ideas, ideologies.

And that is the whole Zen standpoint. Why? Because these ideas are the barriers. If you have a certain idea how a saint should be, then you don't know that a saint is unpredictable and you cannot have any ideas about him. All ideas will become a confinement – and a saint worth the name would not like to be confined in any idea. He is freedom. Nobody can draw a line around him – 'This is the place you should be, and don't go out of it.' If somebody allows that – allows that you draw a line around him and make a definition and he will remain there – then he is not a saint at all. Beware of him: he is there to deceive you. If he follows your ideas he is going to deceive you.

Look for a saint who will not bother what your opinion is about him. Find out somebody who does not care what your definition of a saint is, and you will be benefitted. A saint who follows you and your ideas is worthless. He is your follower. No saint – no Christ, no Buddha, no Mahavira – has ever been according to you. That's why they got into trouble. Jesus would not have been crucified if he was according to you. Neither would Mahavir have been stoned, thrown out of villages, whipped, beaten, if he was just following your idea of a saint. No, he was not following you.

No saint can follow your ideas. The moment somebody starts following your ideas, he is not a saint. He does not know freedom – he has not stumbled upon his inner freedom, he does not know who he is. He gets his ego from you and your ideas. This is the criterion to judge: if you see a man who goes on following a certain kind of ideology in his behaviour.... There is a Jaina monk, he follows the ideas of the Jainas. And there is a Catholic monk, he follows the ideas of Catholic Christians, he behaves accordingly. These are slaves, these are not real men.

A real man cannot be confined, cannot be imprisoned. I am not a saint in that way, that you can have some ideas about me. Forget about sainthood. Just look into me, just be here and have a taste of me. Don't carry any ideas – I am not going to be bothered by them. If you are shocked, that is your problem.

And I am not in any way in any need to get any identity from you. So what you say does not matter. If you are here to learn something, learn it. And meanwhile you will have to go through many shocks. Those shocks are really processes of understanding; those shocks are processes of learning.

If you are courageous, only then can you be here. Otherwise go and find some dummy-saint somewhere.

And why have a few words become condemned? Words in themselves are just sounds – how have certain words become condemned? what will be the reason? The reason is that you have certain ideas about certain things. For example, if you are against sex, then all words connected with sex will be condemned. If you are against anything, then all words connected with it will be condemned. Words are not really condemned – the condemnation shows that you are condemning something else. If you are against sex, then even the word 'sex' is shocking. Then you cannot use that word – then you have to use euphemisms, you have to go roundabout.

For centuries man has not talked about sex. This is the first century in human history when people have become courageous enough to talk about it directly – to think about it, to research into it, to

explore the idea. And thousands of things have been explored in these twenty, thirty years which were never known – because nobody would even dare to think about it. The man who would like to go into it scientifically would be thought mad, would have been killed, Lynched, murdered.

That's why one of the most potential energies has remained unexplored. We know much more about the moon than we know about sex. We know much more about electrons than we know about sex. This seems to be stupid – because sex is our energy. We are born out of it. You happened through it, your children will happen through it – the whole existence is sexual and sensuous.

If you miss understanding this energy called sex, you will miss understanding life itself. And how can you understand God if you miss understanding life itself? But man does not know much. Don't think that because you have three children you know much about sex – having children is nothing. Having children has nothing to do with knowing about sex. Even animals have children – they don't know anything about sex.

In Africa, for centuries a tribe has believed that the birth of a child has nothing to do with intercourse; the birth of a child is a gift of God. And the reason was that they cannot calculate much ahead and they cannot count much; they don't have any arithmetic. So to count nine months was so much. Because the child will come after nine months – and not always; sometimes it will come and sometimes it will not come. So how to connect that the child has something to do with intercourse? Each intercourse is not followed by a child – so how to connect? And there is a gap of nine months; it is a long gap. For a primitive society which has no arithmetic, to count nine months is impossible. How to count it? And who will keep the count? They had no idea. And they have been giving birth to children – but they had no idea.

To give birth to a child is mechanical. It does not presuppose any knowledge of sex, it NEED not presuppose any knowledge. The energy called sex is still mysterious – we know more about electricity than about sexuality. This is foolish, because electricity is not such an important phenomenon as sexuality. We are more close to sexuality, more involved in it. We can live without electricity but we cannot live without sexuality. But why did the very word become condemned? Because the idea was a sin.

I have heard...

Bride-to-be: 'And when we're married, I'm going to cook for him, sew for him, shine his shoes, darn his socks – what more could any man want?'

Mother: 'Nothing – unless he's evil-minded.'

Sex is thought to be something evil-minded. Such a natural phenomenon, such an innocent phenomenon, is thought evil-minded. Then all words connected with sex will become disrespectful – they cannot be pronounced in a civilized world, in a cultured society. We dropped the whole idea of sex, so with it disappeared all words connected with it. Exactly the same is the case with death too – we don't talk about death much. Even to talk about death looks a little obscene. Looks a little embarrassing – people don't talk about it.

Just a few days before, one English publisher – Sheldon Press – offered to publish one of my books, UNTIL YOU DIE. They wrote a letter: 'The book is beautiful, but we cannot have the title, because

the very idea of death – UNTIL YOU DIE – will put people off. We will have to change the title,’ they said.

The very title! Such a beautiful title – UNTIL YOU DIE. A part of a saying of Jesus! And in a Christian country! They think the title is not right, the title has to be changed – ‘the very idea puts people off.’

Nobody wants to think about death, nobody wants to look into death. So words connected with death will fall out of circulation.

To me, the whole of life is holy. All that exists is holy, unconditionally holy. I don’t have any condemnation for anything. Then suddenly the whole language becomes available to me.

Question 4

BELOVED OSHO: CAME TO POONA A WHILE AGO, GOT INTO RAJNEESH, TOOK SANNYAS, TURNED ORANGE, DID A FEW GROUPS, STARTED WORKING IN THE ASHRAM, DROPPED SOME OLD GAMES – DOPE AND ALL THAT STUFF – FELL IN LOVE, GETTING HIGHER EVERY DAY...

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WORK? YES, THE REAL THING! YOU KNOW? EVERY MASTER SAYS IT: FIND YOUR PATH, AND WORK ON THE SELF. SOME ALSO CALL IT ‘INITIATION’. SO FAR, HAVEN’T GOT A CLUE WHAT THAT MEANS.

First: We don’t do any work here. The very word is inapplicable to the thing that goes on here. It is play, it is not work. To call it work makes it serious, to call it work is to bring ego in, to call it work is to create conflict. Work means conflict – that’s why Gurdjieff people used the word ‘work’. The whole system of Gurdjieff is known as ‘the work’, because Gurdjieff believes in friction, conflict: man has to fight hard.

With me, it is not work at all. When I am gone, if you want to call my work anything, call it ‘the play’. It is playing. It is not conflict, it is not friction, it is relaxation. It is not in fact DOING something – rather, allowing God to happen. This is diametrically opposite to work.

It is not that you have to do something to grow. In fact all your doing is undoing. All that you do will create more hindrances, obstacles, fear you – because the more you do, the more ego grows. No, you have to stop doing. You have to start floating, flowing. Go with the stream, relax. ‘Let go’ is my mantra. And when you are in an utter let-go, things start happening. Not that you do – God does them, the whole does them. You simply allow.

It is as if in the morning you are in your room with closed doors. The sun is at the door, silently standing there waiting for you. It will not even knock, it will not ring the bell, it will simply wait. You open the door and it enters. Exactly like that, God is always at the door. But it will not call you, and it will not knock, and it will not shout – it will not even whisper. It will stand there. And I am calling God ‘it’ just to be in tune with the Zen people – they call it IT.

It will go on standing there: if you open the door it comes in. Just all that is needed is you should not create a hindrance, you should not block the way. Don’t stand in the way, that’s all. That’s all

my work is – to teach you how to play around, how to be in Love with existence, how to be more sensuous, available, sensitive. How to see the trees, how to listen to the birds, and how to look at the stars... so by and by, God starts showering on you from everywhere.

You ask, WHAT ABOUT THE WORK? It has started. But all great things start very silently; they don't start with a bang. They start very silently, in tremendous silence – just like a child gets conceived in the mother's womb... so silently. Just as a seed disappears into the earth, so silently... and arises a sprout. Yes, like that.

It has started. The question is from Prashantam: The day you looked into my eyes and the day I looked into your eyes, it started. It is not a formal thing – initiation with me is not a formal thing. Sometimes it starts even before you have ever seen me, sometimes it starts when you are thousands of miles away from me.

Just the other night, one beautiful woman took sannyas – I have given her the name 'Paraveeta'. For months she has been writing – she wants to come, she wants to come. And she wanted assurance that I will be here when she comes, and she was feeling she is getting late and I may be gone, and she was much worried. Now she has come. The work on her had started already before she came here. Before she came here she had fallen in love with me. Her heart came before her body came here – she became connected; she was thousands of miles away.

The work that goes on here – which I don't call work – is a love affair. The initiation that happens here is not something formal. The initiation is in the depth of the heart, in your very being. Prashantam, it has started.

And you say, WHAT ABOUT THE WORK? YES, THE REAL THING! The real thing has started, and you are now asking for the unreal thing. You want some visible indication of it, you want something very physical with it. No, that I am not going to give to you. It is something spiritual, and you will have to look within yourself. It has started. The seed has broken, the sprouts are coming. Maybe it will take a little longer time for you to recognize them, because they are underground yet. Soon they will come above the ground: get ready to take care of them.

EVERY MASTER SAYS IT: FIND YOUR PATH, AND WORK ON THE SELF. I say: Find your path – that's enough. Then play on the path. Then there is no question of work; all work is before you have found the path. Yes, then there is work – you have to search for the path. Once the path is found – what Buddha calls SROTAAPANNA – once you have entered the stream, then the stream will do.

Now you relax! Now even swimming is sheer wastage. Don't waste your energy. Now the river is going already to the ocean... I am going already to the ocean. If you have become a sannyasin, you have become a srotaapanna – you have entered the stream. I am going: you need not swim in me, you simply relax, you become one with me... and you will reach to the ocean. You relax – that is the meaning of surrender.

Question 5

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL DISEASE OF HUMANKIND ACCORDING TO ZEN?

Desire, desiring, becoming. Always hankering for something – money, God, NIRVANA. Always hankering for something – power, prestige, pull. Always hankering for something. Never being here, always being somewhere else: that is the fundamental disease, the disease called 'becoming'. You are a being. You are already that which you can become – there is no need for you to become anything else. You are already that which you are now trying to become.

That's why, if you go to a Zen master and you ask: 'I want to become a Buddha,' he will beat you. And he will say, 'If I don't beat you, the world will laugh at me. You are a Buddha – and you ask how to become a Buddha?'

You are gods and goddesses: that is the most fundamental here. All that is needed is a recognition – nothing else is needed. You are not to become. How can you become if you are not already? One only becomes that which one is. You cannot become something else, it is impossible! How can the rose become a lotus? The lotus becomes the lotus, the rose becomes the rose.

If somebody becomes a buddha, that simply means he was a Buddha already. If somebody becomes a god, that simply means he was God already – it took time for him to recognize it. Dull people take a longer time to recognize, that's all. Intelligent people don't take that much time. Fully intelligent people, totally intelligent people, don't take a single moment. Just the moment it is uttered, it is recognized. Just a nod of the head, and the work is finished.

This desiring creates a drunkenness in man. It creates unawareness, it creates unconsciousness, you become alcoholic. Because you are not here – so how can you be rooted? how can you be grounded? how can you be centered? You are roaming all around the world, all over the world – to be this, to be that, to be there, to be somewhere else.... Except THIS place where you find yourself, you want to be everywhere else. Except this moment that you are in, you want to be in every other moment.

You think of life beyond death – but you never live the life that is before death.

One man came to me some day and asked, 'What do you say about life after death?' I said, 'I don't talk about it. I talk about life BEFORE death.' After death? You have not even lived the life that is before death, and you are talking about life after death? Live this! and the other will take care of itself.

Desire, ambition, creates a drunkenness. One's eyes become dull, one starts feeling very very shaky, one becomes unconscious. The desire becomes a curtain on the consciousness – that is the fundamental disease. And if you are in desire, you cannot see what truth is. Truth can be known only when the drunkenness called desire disappears. Then your eyes are clear and clean. Then whatsoever is, appears as it is – you become a mirror.

A drunk is standing in a restaurant in front of a cigarette machine. He puts in one coin after another and takes out one packet of cigarettes after another.

Another customer comes along. He watches for a while and then asks, 'Can't you let me have a go?'

'You must be cuckoo!' replies the drunk. 'Can't you see I'm on a winning streak?'

Or this....

Two soldiers were drinking in a small-town joint. Before them were bottles in a great variety, and at intervals they took time out to stare at an old crone who sat at a nearby table. One or the other of the fellows would murmur, 'Not yet.'

An onlooker, intrigued, finally asked the reason for their strange behaviour. To which one replied, 'As soon as she begins to look beautiful we are going to call it a night.'

Yes, if you become too drunk then things start appearing in a different way. Then an ugly woman can look beautiful, then an old woman can look young. Then things are no more as they are. When you are drunk you live in a totally private world.

A man stayed out late, drinking, and crept into bed in the dark. When he awoke at daybreak, he saw three pairs of feet sticking out at the bottom of the bed – and one was a black pair. He woke his wife up and said, 'Hey, Mary, look at that – three pairs!'

She said, 'Don't talk bloody daft, you're drinking yourself stupid. Go down and count them!'

So the husband got out, carefully counted and examined the objects, and said, 'You're quite right – only two pairs. And ain't mine dirty!'

This is the situation. You can't see what is happening to you. You can't see what is the case, you can't see what is here right now. Because you can't SEE! You can't see at all – you have lost your eyesight, you are blind. Desire is too heavy on your eyes, it is a layer of dust.

According to Zen, desire is the most fundamental disease of mankind. Once you understand this, this desire disappears. Zen does not say: Fight desire. Zen does not say: Struggle against desire – because if you struggle, you will create another desire. That is the way of desire – all struggle is the way of desire. If you want to struggle with the desire, you will have to create another desire. So you will get out of one trap and you will fall immediately into another trap.

That's how it happens to so-called religious people. They get bored with the world and they start desiring God, or NIRVANA – again the desire has come in. And the desire is the world. You cannot desire God; whatsoever you desire remains the world. Desire is the world. Desirelessness is godliness, desirelessness is nirvana.

So the question is not of creating another desire. That's what happens to millions of people. Once they are fed-up with the world – and everybody gets fed-up one day or other – they start creating a new desire, a fresh desire: How to reach heaven? How to go to God? How to live in paradise? The desire has changed direction, but it remains the same. Now they desire SAMADHI, now they desire SIDDHIS, powers, now they desire this and that – but desiring continues. The content has changed, the object has changed, but the situation is the same.

Zen says: Try to understand desire. Try to understand desiring – the mechanism of it. Just see how desiring leads you astray. In that seeing is transformation. One day, when it has been seen utterly, totally, to its very core... a sudden realization, a sudden enlightenment. You are back home: you start laughing.

That's why the monk says, 'When my master kicked me, since that time I have not stopped laughing.' That kick became a sudden enlightenment; that kick opened a door. In that kick, desire disappeared and he could see himself as he is.

So remember this. Otherwise one problem is replaced by another problem, and you remain in the same trouble. The trouble never changes.

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful young girl taking a stroll through the woods. All at once, she saw an extremely ugly bullfrog seated on a log. And to her amazement, the bullfrog spoke to her.

'Maiden,' croaked the frog, 'would you do me a big favour? This will be hard for you to believe, but I was once a handsome, charming prince; and then a mean, ugly old witch cast a spell over me and turned me into a frog.'

'Oh, what a pity!' exclaimed the pretty girl. 'I'll do anything I can to help you break such a spell.'

'Well, Miss,' replied the frog, 'the only way that this spell can be taken off and I can be returned to a handsome young man again is for some lovely and pretty young girl to take me home and let me spend the night under her pillow.'

The young girl took the ugly frog home and placed him beneath her pillow that night when she retired. When she awoke the next morning, sure enough, there beside her in the bed was a very young, handsome man, and plainly of royal blood.

And so they lived happily ever after, except that to this day her father and mother still do not believe her story.

And all your life is nothing but such stories, because all desiring creates only fantasies. All desiring is fabulous, all desiring creates illusions. You go on changing – you change one illusion to another, you go from one illusion to another, but you go on changing illusions. Always from one illusion to another illusion is your movement.

When you understand the very mechanism of illusions as such, there is a break, a breakthrough. An insight dawns on you. In that moment, not only this world becomes meaningless, ALL worlds become meaningless. In that moment, there is nothing to be desired. You don't desire even desirelessness; there is nothing to be desired. Suddenly desire is not there, that smoke is not there, and the flame burns bright.

Remember not to change problems, from one illusion to another. It does not help much.

A little girl was deeply impressed by the clergyman's sermon as to the separation of the sheep and the goats. That night after she had gone to bed she was heard sobbing, and the mother went to her to ask what was the matter.

'It's about the goats!' Jenny confessed at last. 'I'm so afraid I am a goat, and so I'll never go to heaven. Oh, I'm so afraid I'm a goat.'

'My dear,' the mother assured her weeping child, 'you're a sweet little lamb. If you were to die tonight, you would go straight to heaven.' Her words were successful in quieting the little girl, and she slept.

But the following night Jenny was found crying again in her bed, and when the mother appeared she wailed, 'I'm afraid about the goats.'

'But Mother has told you that you are a little lamb, and that you must never worry over being a goat.'

Jenny, however, was by no means comforted, and continued her sobs.

'Yes, Mamma,' she declared softly, 'I know that. But I'm afraid – awfully afraid you're a goat.'

From one problem to another... but the basic problem remains This is not the way to solve problems – one has to look at the very root from where the problems arise.

So Zen does not call anger the problem, Zen does not call sex the problem, Zen does not call greed the problem, Zen does not call aggression, violence, the problem. Zen calls the root problem desiring – and all other problems arise out of desiring. Cut the root, and the whole tree disappears.

Question 6

OSHO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE EXACTLY?

Selling water by the river.

Master Sogaku Harada died at the age of ninety-one. At his funeral service hung a piece of calligraphy written by himself:

FOR FORTY YEARS I HAVE BEEN SELLING WATER

BY THE BANK OF A RIVER.

HO, HO!

MY LABOURS HAVE BEEN WHOLLY WITHOUT MERIT.

That can be said only by a Zen master. First he says 'Selling water by the river' – where there is no need really. The river is flowing: you can simply jump into the river and drink your fill. But people are so foolish, they need somebody to sell water even by the river.

Secondly he says 'Ho, ho! My labours have been wholly without merit.' That is a great statement. Zen masters say that if you do good, it is useless. Because basically everything is good – how can you do any more good? If you make people enlightened, what is the point of it? because they were already enlightened – you are not doing anything new! 'Ho, ho! My labours have been wholly without merit.'

First we go on selling water by the side of the river. Mm? If you are a little intelligent you can jump yourself. And finally we know all effort is meaningless, in vain. Because even if you become enlightened, nothing is gained. You were always enlightened.

But this can be said only by a Zen master – the insight is so deep. Both things are profound. Nobody needs to be enlightened, because everybody is already enlightened. It is such a ridiculous thing for people to keep trying to enlighten you.

It is so ridiculous for me to go on enlightening you every day. And you are stubborn... and you will not become enlightened. And I go on selling the water by the river.... And you PAY for the water! And you won't look at the rivet, and the river is flowing by the side. It has always been there – before the thirst is created, the river is there. Before the desire, the fulfillment.

So you ask, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE EXACTLY? Selling water by the river. Ho, ho!

CHAPTER 3

And the Sky Abides

23 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

WHEN BANKEI HELD HIS SECLUSION-WEEKS OF MEDITATION, PUPILS FROM MANY PARTS OF JAPAN CAME TO ATTEND. DURING ONE OF THESE GATHERINGS A PUPIL WAS CAUGHT STEALING. THE MATTER WAS REPORTED TO BANKEI WITH THE REQUEST THAT THE CULPRIT BE EXPELLED. BANKEI IGNORED THE CASE.

LATER THE PUPIL WAS CAUGHT IN A SIMILAR ACT, AND AGAIN BANKEI DISREGARDED THE MATTER. THIS ANGERED THE OTHER PUPILS, WHO DREW UP A PETITION ASKING FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THE THIEF, STATING THAT OTHERWISE THEY WOULD LEAVE IN A BODY.

WHEN BANKEI HAD READ THE PETITION HE CALLED EVERYONE BEFORE HIM. 'YOU ARE WISE BROTHERS,' HE TOLD THEM. 'YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS NOT RIGHT. YOU MAY GO SOMEWHERE ELSE TO STUDY IF YOU WISH, BUT THIS POOR BROTHER DOES NOT EVEN KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG. WHO WILL TEACH HIM IF I DO NOT? I AM GOING TO KEEP HIM HERE EVEN IF ALL THE REST OF YOU LEAVE.'

A TORRENT OF TEARS CLEANSED THE FACE OF THE BROTHER WHO HAD STOLEN. ALL DESIRE TO STEAL HAD VANISHED.

Compassion is the ultimate flowering of consciousness. It is passion released of all darkness, it is passion freed from all bondage, it is passion purified of all poison. Passion becomes compassion. Passion is the seed, compassion is the flowering of it.

But compassion is not kindness, kindness is not compassion. Kindness is an ego-attitude, it strengthens your ego. When you are kind to somebody, you feel the upper hand. When you are

kind to somebody there is a deep insult – you are humiliating the other, you are feeling happy in his humiliation. That's why kindness can never be forgiven. Whomsoever you have been kind to will remain somehow somewhere angry with you, is bound to take revenge. Because kindness is only on the surface as compassion, but deep in the depth it has nothing to do with compassion. It has other ulterior motives.

Compassion is unmotivated, it has not motive at all. It is simply because you have, you give – not that the other needs. The other is not a consideration at all in compassion. Because you have, you go on overflowing. Compassion is very spontaneous, natural, like breathing. Kindness is a cultivated attitude. Kindness is a kind of cunningness; it is calculation, it is arithmetic.

You have heard one of the most important sayings – it happens in almost all the scriptures of the world in one form or another: Do unto others as you would like to be done with you. This is a calculated attitude, this is not compassion. This has nothing to do with religion – it is a very lower kind of morality, a very worldly morality: Do unto others as you would like to be done with you. It is very business-like, it is not religious at all. You are doing only because you would like exactly the same in return. It is selfish, it is self-centered, it is egoistic. You are not serving the other, you are not loving the other – in a roundabout way you are serving yourself. You are using the other.

It is very enlightened egoism, but it is egoism – very intelligent, but it is egoism. Compassion is a very uncalculated flowering, flowing. You simply go on giving because there is no other way to be.

So remember, the first thing: it is not kindness, in one sense – in the sense you use the word 'kindness' it is not kindness. In another sense, compassion is the real kindness. You are not being kind to somebody, you are not bigger than the other, you are simply releasing the energy that you are receiving from the whole. It comes from the whole, it goes to the whole – you don't stand as an obstacle, that's all.

When Alexander was coming to India he went to see one great mystic, Diogenes. And Diogenes was lying on a Riverbed, taking a sunbath. Alexander had always cherished the desire to see this man Diogenes, because he had heard that this man has nothing, yet there is no other man who is more rich than this man. He has something within him, he has a luminous being. He is a beggar, but he is really an emperor. So Alexander had become intrigued. While coming to India he heard that Diogenes was just nearby, so he went to see him.

Early morning, the sun is rising, Diogenes is Lying naked on the sand. Alexander says, 'I am happy to see you. Whatsoever I have heard seems to be true. I have never seen a happier man. Can I do something for you, sir?' And Diogenes said, 'You just stand to the side – you are preventing the sun. And remember! never prevent the sun. You are dangerous, you can prevent the sun reaching many people. Just stand to the side.'

Compassion is not something that you give to others, it is simply not preventing the sun. See the point of it: It is simply not preventing God. It is becoming a vehicle of the divine, it is simply allowing the divine to flow through you. You become a hollow bamboo and God goes on flowing through you. You know? only the hollow bamboo can become a flute – because only a hollow bamboo is capable of allowing a song to flow through it.

Compassion is not from you, compassion is from God; kindness is from you – the first thing to be understood. Kindness is something that you do, compassion is something that God does. You simply don't prevent, you don't come in the way, you don't stand in the way. You allow the sun to fall, to penetrate, to go wherever it wants.

Kindness strengthens the ego – and compassion is possible only when the ego has disappeared utterly. So don't be misguided by your dictionaries, because in the dictionaries you will find compassion is synonymous with kindness. It is not so in the real dictionary of existence. And Zen has only one dictionary, the dictionary of the universe.

Mohammedans have the holy Koran as their scripture and Hindus have the Veda as their scripture, and Sikhs have Gurugranth, and Christians have the Bible as their scripture, and Jews have the Talmud. If you ask me, 'What is the scripture of Zen?' they don't have any scripture, their scripture is the universe. And that is the beauty of Zen.

In every stone is the sermon, and in every sound of a bird God is reciting. In every movement around you it is God dancing.

Compassion is when you allow this eternal song to flow through you, to pulsate through you – when you cooperate with this divinity, when you move hand in hand with God. It has nothing to do with you; you have to disappear for it to be. For compassion to be, you have to disappear utterly – it flows only into your absence.

Kindness cultivated makes you very egoistic. You can go and see: people who are kind are very very egoistic, more egoistic than the people who are cruel. This is strange. The cruel person feels a little guilty too, but the so-called kind person feels perfectly okay – always holier-than-thou, always better than others. He is very very self-conscious in what he is doing; his each act brings more energy and more power to his ego. He is becoming greater and greater every day. The whole trip is of the ego.

This is the first thing, compassion is not the so-called kindness. It has the essential part of kindness in it – the essential part of being soft, of being sympathetic, of being empathetic, of not being hard, of being creative, of being helpful. But nothing is done as an act on your part; everything flows through you. It is from God, and you are happy and thankful that God has chosen you as a vehicle. You become transparent and it passes through you. You become a transparent glass so the sun passes through you – you don't hinder. It is pure kindness with no ego in it.

The second thing: compassion is not your so-called love either. It has the essential quality of love, but it is not YOUR love. Your love is just lust parading as love. Your love has nothing to do with love – it is a kind of exploitation of the other, in a beautiful name, with a great slogan.

You go on saying 'I love you' – but have you ever loved anybody? You have simply used others; you have not loved. Then how can using the other become love? In fact, to use the other is the greatest destructive act possible in the world – because to use the other as a means is criminal.

Immanuel Kant, describing his concept of morality, says: 'To use the other as a means is immoral – the basic immoral act.' Never use the other as a means, because everybody is an end unto himself.

Respect the other as an end unto himself. When you respect the other as an end unto himself, you love. when you start using – the husband using the wife, the wife using the husband-there are motives. and you can see it all around.

People are not destroyed by hate, people are destroyed by their so-called love. And because they call it love, they can't look into it. Because they call it love they think it has to be good and all right. It is not. Humanity is suffering from this disease of so-called love. if you look deep down into it, you will find just naked lust. Lust is not love. Lust wants to get, love wants to give. the whole emphasis of lust is: Get as much as you can, and give as little as you can. Give less, get more. If you have to give, give it only as a bait.

Lust is absolutely a bargain. yes, you have to give something, because you want to get – but get more and give less. That is what the business mind is. If you can get without giving, good. If you cannot get without giving, then give a little bit, pretend that you are giving very much, and snatch the whole from the other.

Exploitation is what lust is. Love is not exploitation. So compassion is not love in the ordinary sense, and yet it is love in its real sense. Compassion only gives, it knows no idea of getting back. Not that it does not get back, no – never think that for a single moment. When you give without any idea of getting, you get a thousandfold. But that is another thing; that has nothing to do with you. And when you want to get too much, in fact you are only deceived; you don't get anything. Finally, you are only disillusioned.

Each love affair ends in a disillusionment. Have you not observed it, that each love affair finally leaves you in a ditch of sadness, depression, of being cheated? Compassion knows no disillusionment, because compassion does not start with an illusion. Compassion never asks for any return, there is no need. First, 'Because it is not my energy that I am giving, it is god's energy. who am I to ask anything for it?' Even to ask for a thank-you is meaningless.

That's what happened when a man came to Jesus and Jesus touched him and he was cured. And the man thanked Jesus – naturally, he was in tremendous gratitude. He had been suffering from that disease for years and there was no cure and the physicians had told him that 'Now nothing can be done, you have to accept it.' And he is cured.

And Jesus says, 'No sir, don't be thankful towards me, be thankful towards God. It is something that has happened between you and God! I am nobody in it. It is your faith that has healed you, and it is God's energy that has become available because of your faith. I am, at the most, a bridge – a bridge through which God's energy and your faith have joined hands. You need not be worried about me, you need not be thankful to me. Thank God. Thank your own faith. Something has transpired between you and God. I come nowhere.'

This is what compassion is. Compassion goes on giving, but knows no feeling of giving, knows no feeling that 'I am the giver'. And then existence goes on responding in thousands of ways. You give a little love and from everywhere love starts flowing. The man of compassion is not trying to snatch away, he is not greedy. He does not wait for the return, he goes on giving. He goes on getting – but that is not in his mind.

So, the second thing: compassion is not the so-called love, and yet it is the real love.

The third thing: compassion is intelligence but not intellect. When intelligence is freed of all forms, of all logical forms, when intelligence is freed from all argumentation, when intelligence is freed from the so-called rationality – because rationality is a confinement – when intelligence is freedom, it is compassion. A man of compassion is tremendously intelligent, but he is not an intellectual. He can see through and through, he has absolute vision, he has real eyes to see, nothing is hidden to him – but it is not guesswork. It is not through logic, it is not through inference, it is through clear eyesight.

Remember it: the man of compassion is not unintelligent, but he is non-intellectual. He is tremendous intelligence, he is the very embodiment of intelligence. He is pure radiance. He knows – but he does not think. What is the point of thinking when you know? You think only as a substitute. Because you don't know, hence you think. Because you can't know, hence you think. Thinking is a substitute process – it is a poor substitute, remember. When you can know, when you can see, who bothers to think?

The man of compassion knows; the intellectual thinks. The intellectual is a thinker and the man of compassion is a non-thinker, non-intellectual. Intelligence he has, tremendous intelligence he has, but his intelligence does not function through the pattern of intellect. The intelligence functions intuitively.

And the fourth thing: compassion is not feeling – because feeling has many things in it which are not in compassion at all. Feeling has sentimentality, emotionality – those things don't exist in compassion. The man of compassion feels, but without any emotion. He feels, but there is no sentimentality. He will do whatsoever is needed, yet he remains untouched by it. This has to be understood very deeply. And once you understand compassion, you have understood what a Buddha is.

Somebody is suffering: the man of feeling will start crying. Crying is not going to help. Somebody's house is on fire: the man of feeling will shout and cry and beat his chest. That is not going to help. The man of compassion will start moving – he will not cry, that is pointless. Tears don't help. Tears cannot put the fire off, tears cannot become the medicine for the suffering, tears cannot help a drowning man.

A man is drowning and you are standing on the bank and crying and weeping – and crying and weeping really hard. You are a man of feeling, certainly, but not a man of compassion. The man of compassion acts. The man of compassion immediately jumps into action. His action is immediate; he does not waver for a single moment. His action is instant – the moment something arises in his vision he immediately translates it into action. Not that he exactly translates – it is translated. His understanding and his action are two aspects of the same phenomenon, they are not two separate things. One side of it is called understanding, the other side of it is called the act.

That's why I say a religious man is by his very nature involved, committed – committed to life, committed to God. He will not cry and weep. The man of feeling sometimes appears as if he is the man of compassion. Don't be misguided – the man of feeling is of no use. In fact he will create more mess. He will not be of any help, he will create more confusion. He will delay things rather than being a help.

The man of compassion is sharp. Without tears, without emotions, he simply moves into action. He is not cold, but neither is he hot. He is simply warm. And cool. That is the paradox of the man of

compassion. He is warm, because he is loving, and yet he keeps his cool. His cool is never lost; whatsoever happens he remains cool, and out of his coolness he acts. And because he remains cool, he helps.

These four things to be understood, then you have a vision from four dimensions of what compassion is. How does this compassion arise? – because it cannot be cultivated. If you cultivate, it becomes kindness. How has this compassion to be brought into life? You cannot go into the scriptures, you cannot read and be helped by what Buddha and Christ say – because that will bring intellect in, it will not bring intelligence.

You cannot go on loving more and more, the way you have been loving up to now. If you move in the same direction you will not attain to compassion. Your love is not in the right direction. If you go on loving in the same way – if you listen to a Buddha talking about love, or a Christ talking about love, and you think, 'Good. So I have to love more, the way I have been loving up to now' – then your quantity will be more but your quality will remain the same. You will go in the same direction.

Your direction is basically wrong. You have not loved. Once this thing sinks deep into your heart, that 'I have not loved yet'.... Yes, it is very terrible to feel that 'I have not loved yet' – it is very very hard. We can believe others have not loved – that's what we already believe . Nobody has loved you – that's okay, people are hard. But to see that you have not loved shatters your ego.

That's why people don't want to see that simple fact that 'I have not loved yet.' And because they don't want to see, they don't see. And because they don't see, they are never going to be transformed. They will go on moving in the same rut; they will go on repeating the same mechanical thing again and again. And again and again they will be disillusioned.

So how to bring compassion in? If it was just your love you could have run in the same direction – to run faster, with more speed and more quantity, would be the right thing to do. But you are not in the right direction. So if you go faster, you will be going faster away from it, not towards it. Speed is not going to help, because in the first place you are moving in the wrong direction – it is the direction of lust and desire.

Then how to bring compassion in? And I say it is not feeling either. Otherwise you can cry your heart out, you can beat yourself, you can cry a thousand and one tears for a thousand and one sufferings all around, you can become very emotional. You can feel for everybody in Vietnam, in Korea, in Pakistan, or anywhere; you can feel for all the poor people.

Leo Tolstoy remembers his mother in his memoirs. He says she was a very kind woman, very very kind – 'kind' in the sense I am using it, not in the sense of compassion. She was very kind – so kind that she used to cry in the theater the whole time. They were very rich people, they belonged to royalty. A servant used to be around Leo Tolstoy's mother with many handkerchiefs when she would go to the theater, because she would need them again and again. Crying the whole time.

And Tolstoy says: But I was surprised to see that in Russia, even in winter when the cold would be so much, below zero, and snow would be falling, she would go to the theater – she was a great lover of theater – and the driver of her coach would go on sitting outside the coach in the falling snow.

And almost always it used to happen, the man would die. Because nobody knew when the countess would come out – any moment she would get so much disturbed by the theater that she would run towards home to fall into her bed and cry. So the coachman, the driver, had to be there on the coach and it would happen that he would get so cold that he would die. And when she would come out the driver would be thrown away, replaced by another man, and she would go on. And she would never think about this man, who had simply died there for no reason. And she would go on crying tears for something she had seen in the theater.

Sentimental people, emotional people. It costs nothing to cry, it costs nothing to feel. It costs much to be compassionate, it costs your whole life to be compassionate. A man of compassion is a very realistic man. The man of feeling simply lives in dreams, vague emotions, fantasies.

So it cannot be brought through feeling, either. Then how to bring it? What is the Zen way to bring it? To bring it, the only way is meditation. It is attained through meditation. So we have to understand what meditation is.

Gautam Buddha, the founder of Zen, the founder of all great meditative techniques in the world, defines it in one word. Somebody asked him one day, 'Bhagwan, what is meditation? What is it all about?' And Gautam Buddha said a single word, he said: HALT! That was his definition of meditation. He says, 'If it halts, it is meditation.' The full sentence is: 'The mad mind does not halt. If it halts, it is meditation.'

'The mad mind does not halt. If it halts, it is meditation.' Meditation is a state of thoughtless awareness: Meditation is a state of non-emotional, non-sentimental, non-thinking awareness. When you are simply aware, when you become a pillar of awareness. When you are simply awakened, alert, attentive. When you are just a pure awareness.

How to enter into it? The Zen people have a special word for the entry, they call it HUA T'OU. This Chinese word means ante-thought, or ante-word. The mind, before it is stirred by a thought, is called HUA T'OU. Between two thoughts there is a gap, that gap is called HUA T'OU.

Watch. One thought passes on the screen of your mind – on the radar screen of your mind one thought passes like a cloud. First it is vague – it is coming, it is coming – then it is there suddenly on the screen. Then it is moving, then it has gone out of the screen, again it becomes vague and disappears... another thought comes. Between these two thoughts there is a gap – for a single moment or a split second the screen is without any thought.

That state of pure no-thought is called HUA T'OU – ante-words, ante-thought, before the mind is stirred. Because we are not alert inside, that's why we go on missing it – otherwise meditation is happening each moment. You have just to see it happening, you have just to become aware what treasure you are carrying always within you. It is not that meditation has to be brought from somewhere else. The meditation is there, the seed is there. You have just to recognize it, nurture it, take care of it, and it starts growing.

The interval between two thoughts is HUA T'OU. And that is the door to enter into meditation. HUA T'OU – the word literally means 'word head'. 'Word' is a spoken word, and 'head' is that which precedes the word. HUA T'OU is the moment before a thought arises. As soon as a thought arises

it becomes a HUA WEI – HUA WEI literally means ‘word tail’. And then when the thought has gone or the word has gone and there is a gap again, it is again HUA T’OU. Meditation is looking into this HUA T’OU.

‘One should not be afraid of rising thoughts,’ says Buddha, ‘but only of the delay in being aware of them.’ This is a tremendously new approach towards the mind, never attempted before Buddha. Buddha says one should not be afraid of rising thoughts. One should only be afraid of one thing – of not being aware of them, of being delayed in awareness.

When a thought arises, if with the thought your awareness is also there – if you can see it arising, if you can see it coming, if you can see it there, if you can see it going – then there is no problem at all. This very seeing, by and by, becomes your citadel. This very awareness brings you many fruits. You can first see, when you see that you are not the thought. Thought is separate from you, you are not identified with it. You are consciousness and it is content. It comes and goes – it is a guest, you are the host. This is the first experience of meditation.

Zen talks about two words: FOREIGN DUST. ‘And this is just where we would begin our training.’ Zen says, ‘For instance, a traveller stops at an inn where he passes the night or takes his meal. And as soon as he has done so, he packs and continues his journey, because he has no time to stay longer. As for the host of the inn, he has nowhere to go.

‘The deduction is that the one who does not stay is the guest, and the one who does stay is the host. Therefore, a thing is foreign when it does not stay. Again, in a clear sky when the sun rises and sunlight enters the house through an opening, the dust is seen moving in the ray of light – whereas the empty space is unmoving. Therefore that which is still is voidness, and that which moves is dust. Foreign dust illustrates false thinking and voidness illustrates self-nature – that is, the permanent host who does not follow the guest in the latter’s coming and going.’

This is a great insight. Consciousness is not the content. You are consciousness: thoughts come and go, you are the host. Thoughts are the guests – they come and stay for a while, take a little rest, or their food, or stay overnight, and then they are gone. You are always there. You are always the same, you never change you are eternally there. You are eternity itself.

Watch it. Sometimes you are ill, sometimes you are healthy, sometimes you are depressed, sometimes you are happy. One day you were very very small, a child, then you became young, and then you became old. One day you were strong; one day comes, you become weak. All these things come and go, but your consciousness remains the same. That’s why, if you look inside, you cannot reckon how old you are – because there is no age. If you go inside and look and try to find out there how old you are, there is no age, because there is no time. You are exactly the same as when you were a child or when you were young. You are absolutely the same inside.

For age you have to look at the calendar, at the diary, at your birth certificate – you have to look for something outside. Inside you will not find any age or aging. Inside there is timelessness. You remain the same – whether there is a cloud called depression or the cloud called happiness, you remain the same.

Sometimes there are black clouds in the sky – the sky does not change because of those black

clouds. And sometimes there are white clouds also, and the sky does not change because of those white clouds. Clouds come and go, and the sky remains. Clouds come and go, and the sky abides.

You are the sky and thoughts are the clouds. The first thing, if you watch your thoughts minutely, if you don't miss them, if you look at them directly, will be this understanding – and this is a great understanding. This is the beginning of your Buddhahood, this is the beginning of your awakening. You are no more asleep, you are no more identified with the clouds that come and go. Now you know you abide for ever.

Suddenly all anxiety disappears. Nothing changes you, nothing will ever change you – so what is the point of being anxious, in anguish? What is the point of being worried? No worry can do anything to you – these things come and go, they are just ripples on the surface. Deep in your depth, not a single ripple ever arises. And you are there, and you are that. You are that being. Zen people call it the state of being a host.

Ordinarily, you have become too much attached with the guests – hence your misery. One guest comes, you become too much attached. And then the guest is packing and is leaving, and then you cry and you weep and you run around and you go with him – at least to see him off, to give him a send-off. And then you come crying and crying – one guest has left and you feel so miserable. And another guest comes and again you fall in with the guest, again you become identified with the guest, and again he is going.

Guests come and go, they don't stay! They can't stay, they are not to stay, they are not MEANT to stay.

Have you watched any thought? It never stays, it cannot stay. Even if you want to make it stay, it cannot stay. Try. That's what people try sometimes – they try to keep one word in the mind. For example, they want to keep one sound AUM in the mind. For a few seconds they remember, and then it is gone, slipped. Again they are thinking of their market, of their wife, of their children.... Suddenly they become aware – where is that AUM? It has slipped .

Guests are guests – they have not come to stay there. Once you see that all that happens to you is going to move away from you, then why be worried? Watch: let them be there, let them pack, let them leave. You remain. Can you see the peace that arises if you can feel that you always abide? This is silence. This is an unworried state. This is non-anguish. Suffering ceases the moment identification ceases. Don't get identified – that's all. And if you can watch somebody who lives in such eternal timelessness, you will feel a grace, a coolness, a beauty, around him.

It happened – the story is about Buddha, a beautiful story. Listen to it carefully, because you can miss it.

One day, at mealtime, the World Honoured One put on his robe, took his bowl and entered the great town of Sravasti to beg for his food. After he had begged from door to door, he returned to his place. When he had taken his meal, he put away his robe and bowl, washed his feet, arranged his seat, and sat down.

Go slowly, as if the film is moving very slowly. It is a Buddha film, and Buddha films move very slowly. Again, let me repeat it...

One day, at mealtime, the World Honoured One put on his robe, took his bowl and entered the great town of Sravasti to beg for his food. After he had begged from door to door, he returned to his place. When he had taken his meal, he put away his robe and bowl, washed his feet, arranged his seat, and sat down.

Visualize Buddha doing all this and then sitting down on his seat.

This shows the Buddha's ordinary life and daily activities which were similar to those of others and had nothing special about them. There is, however, something which is uncommon, but very few know it.

What is that? What is that uncommon unique quality? – because Buddha is doing ordinary things. Washing his feet, arranging his seat, sitting down, putting away his robe, putting away his bowl, going to bed, coming back – ordinary things everybody is doing.

At the time, one of Buddha's disciples – a great disciple – Subhuti, who was in the assembly, rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, respectfully joined the palms of his hands and said to the Buddha: 'It is very rare, O World Honoured One! It is very rare!'

Now, nothing rare seems to be there on the surface. Buddha coming, putting away his robe, putting away his bowl, arranging his seat, washing his feet, sitting on the seat – there seems to be nothing unusual. And this man, Subhuti....

Subhuti is one of the most insightful disciples of Buddha – all great beautiful stories about Buddha are concerned with Subhuti. This is one of those stories, very rare.

At the time, the elder Subhuti, who was in the assembly, rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, respectfully joined the palms of his hands and said to the Buddha: 'It is very rare, O World Honoured One, it is very rare!' Never seen before, it is unique.

The Tathagata's daily activities were similar to those of other men but there was here one thing which was different, and those who sat face to face with him did not see it. That day, suddenly Subhuti uncovered it, praised it, and said: 'Very rare! Very rare!'

Alas! The Tathagata had been thirty years with his disciples and they still did not know anything about his common acts of daily life. As they did not know, they thought these acts were ordinary and let them pass unnoticed. They thought only that he was similar to others and were, therefore, suspicious of and did not believe what he said. Had Subhuti not seen clearly, no one would really know the Buddha.

So say the scriptures.

If there was not a Subhuti, nobody would have seen what was happening inside. What was happening inside? Buddha remains the host. Not for a single moment does he lose his eternity, timelessness. Buddha remains meditative. Not for a single moment does he lose his HUA T'OU. Buddha remains in his SAMADHI – even when he is washing his feet, he is washing so alertly, so aware, so consciously. Knowing well that 'These feet are not me.' Knowing well that 'This bowl is

not me.' Knowing well that 'This robe is not me.' Knowing well that 'This hunger is not me.' Knowing well that 'All that is around me is not me. I am just a witness, a watcher of it all.'

Hence the grace of Buddha, hence this unworldly beauty of Buddha. He remains cool. This coolness is what meditation is. It has to be attained by being more alert of the host, by being more alert of the guest, by getting disidentified with the guest, by disconnecting yourself from the guest. Thoughts come and go, feelings come and go, dreams come and go, moods come and go, climates change. All that changes is not you.

Is there something that remains unchanging? That's you. And that is God. And to know it, and to be it, and to be in it, is to attain to SAMADHI. DHYANA is the method, meditation is the method, SAMADHI is the goal. DHYANA is the technique to destroy this identification with the guest. And SAMADHI is dissolving into the host, abiding in the host, getting centered there.

EACH NIGHT ONE EMBRACES A BUDDHA WHILE SLEEPING,

EACH MORNING ONE GETS UP AGAIN WITH HIM.

WHEN RISING OR SITTING, BOTH WATCH AND FOLLOW ONE ANOTHER.

WHETHER SPEAKING OR NOT, BOTH ARE IN THE SAME PLACE.

THEY NEVER EVEN FOR A MOMENT PART,

BUT ARE LIKE THE BODY AND ITS SHADOW.

IF YOU WISH TO KNOW THE BUDDHA'S WHEREABOUTS,

IN THE SOUND OF YOUR OWN VOICE THERE IS HE.

This is a Zen saying: 'Each night one embraces a Buddha while sleeping.' The Buddha is always there, the non-Buddha is also there. In you meet the world and NIRVANA, in you meet God and matter, in you meet the soul and the body. In you meet all the mysteries of existence – you are a meeting-place, you are a cross-roads. On one side the whole world, on the other side the whole of God. And you are just a link between the two.

Now, it is only a question of emphasis. If you go on focusing yourself on the world, you remain in the world. If you start changing your focus, if you shift your focus and you start focusing on consciousness, you are God. Just a small change, as if one changes a gear in the car – just like that.

'Each night one embraces a Buddha while sleeping, each morning one gets up again with him.' He is always there, because consciousness is always there; not for a single moment is it lost.

'When rising or sitting, both watch and follow one another.' The host and the guest, both are there. Guests go on changing, but somebody or other is always there in the inn. It is never empty – unless you become disidentified with the guest. Then an emptiness arises. Then sometimes it happens

your inn is empty; there is only the host sitting at ease, not being bothered by any guests. Traffic stops, people don't come. Those moments are of beatitude, those moments are of great blessing.

'Whether speaking or not, both are in the same place.' When you are speaking, there is also something silent in you. When you are lusting, there is something beyond lust. When you are desiring, there is somebody who is not desiring at all. Watch it, and you will find it. Yes, you are very close, and yet you are very different. You meet, and yet you don't meet. You meet like water and oil; the separation remains. The host comes very close to the guest. Sometimes they hold hands and hug each other, but still the host is the host and the guest is the guest. The guest is one who will come and go; the guest will go on changing. And the host is one who remains, who abides.

'They never even for a single moment part, but are like the body and its shadow. If you wish to know the Buddha's whereabouts, in the sound of your own voice there is he.' Don't go on looking for the Buddha somewhere outside. He resides in you – he resides in you as the host.

Now, how to come to this state of the host? I would like to talk to you about a very ancient technique; this technique will be of tremendous help. To come to this unknowable host, to come to this ultimate mystery of your being, this is the way – one of the very simple ways Buddha has proposed.

'Deprive yourself of all possible relationships, and see what you are. Suppose you are not a son to your parents, nor the husband to your wife, nor the father to your children, nor a relative to your kindred, nor a friend to your acquaintances, nor a citizen to your country, and so on and so forth – then you get you-in-yourself.'

Just disconnect. Some time once a day, sit silently and disconnect yourself of all connections. Just as you disconnect the phone, disconnect yourself of all connections. Don't think any more that you are a father to your sons – disconnect. You are no more a father to your son, and you are no more a son to your father. Disconnect that you are a husband or a wife; you are no more a wife, no more a husband. You are no more a boss, no more a servant. You are no more black, no more white. You are no more Indian, no more Chinese, no more German. You are no more young, no more old. Disconnect, go on disconnecting.

A thousand and one connections are there – just go on disconnecting all the connections. When you have disconnected all the connections, then suddenly ask: Who am I? And no answer comes – because you have already disconnected all those answers that would have come.

Who am I? And an answer comes, 'I am a doctor' – but you have disconnected with the patients. An answer comes, 'I am a professor' – but you have disconnected yourself from your students. An answer comes, 'I am Chinese' – but you have disconnected it. An answer comes, 'I am a man or a woman' – but you have disconnected it. An answer comes, 'I am an old man' – but you have disconnected it.

Disconnect all. Then you ARE in yourself. Then for the first time the host is alone and there is no guest. It is very good sometimes to be alone without any guest, because then you can see into your hostness more closely, more carefully. The guests create turmoil, the guests create noise, and they come and demand your attention. And they say, 'Do this, and hot water is needed, and where is the breakfast? and where is my bed? and there are bed bugs'... and a thousand and one things. And the host starts running after the guest. Yes, of course, you have to take care of these people.

When you are completely disconnected, nobody bothers you – nobody can bother you. Suddenly you are there in all your aloneness – and that purity of aloneness, that pristine purity of aloneness. You are like virgin land, the virgin peak of a Himalaya where nobody has ever travelled. This is what virginity is.

This is what I mean when I say, 'Yes, Jesus' mother was a virgin.' This is what I mean. I don't agree with Christian theologians – whatsoever they say is all bull. This is what virginity is – Jesus must have been conceived by Mary when she was in such a disconnected state. When you are in such a disconnected state, of course if a child enters he can only be a Jesus, nobody else.

In ancient India there were methods for how to conceive a child. Unless you are tremendously in deep meditation, don't make love. Let meditation be a preparation for love: that is the whole meaning of tantra. Let meditation be the basis – only then make love. Then you invite greater souls. The deeper you are, the greater soul will be invited.

Mary must have been absolutely disconnected in that moment when Jesus penetrated her. She must have been in this virginity; she must have been a host. She was no more a guest and she was no more clamoured at by the guest and no more identified with the guest. She was not the body, she was not the mind, she was not her thoughts, she was not a wife, she was nobody. In this nobodiness she was there, sitting silently – a pure light, a flame without any smoke around it, a smokeless flame. She was virgin.

And I say to you, exactly the same is the case when Buddha is conceived or when Mahavira is conceived, or Krishna is conceived or Nanak is conceived – because these people cannot be conceived in any other way. These people can enter only the most virgin womb. But this is my meaning of being a virgin. It has nothing to do with the foolish ideas that go around – that she never loved a man, that Jesus was not conceived with a man, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph.

That's why Christians go on saying: 'Jesus the son of Mary.' They don't talk about his father; he was not a father. Son of Mary and son of God – there was no Joseph in-between. But why be so angry about poor Joseph? Why can't God use Joseph too, if he can use Mary? What is wrong in it? He uses Mary for the womb – that does not spoil the story. Then why not use Joseph too? The womb is half the story, because one egg from the mother has been used. Then why not use another egg from Joseph? Why be so angry at this poor carpenter?

No, God uses both. But the state of consciousness must have been of the host. And really, when you are the host there is no wonder if you receive the greatest guest: Jesus comes in. If you are disidentified from all the guests, then God becomes your guest. First you become the host, pure host. Then God becomes your guest.

When you are disconnected... you-in-yourself. Now ask yourself: What is this 'you-in-yourself'? You can never answer this question – it is unanswerable, because it is cut off from all knowable relationships. This way one stumbles upon the unknowable; this is entering into meditation. When you have become settled into it, utterly settled, it becomes SAMADHI.

Now this story. Now you will be able to understand this story easily.

WHEN BANKEI HELD HIS SECLUSION WEEKS OF MEDITATION, PUPILS FROM MANY PARTS OF JAPAN CAME TO ATTEND.

It was a meditation camp, a meditation session, so you have to understand what meditation is. That's why I went into meditation so deeply – otherwise you would miss the whole point of the story. These stories are no ordinary stories, they need a great background. Unless you understand what meditation is, you will read, 'When Bankei held his seclusion-weeks of meditation' – but you will not understand.

... PUPILS FROM MANY PARTS OF JAPAN CAME TO ATTEND. DURING ONE OF THESE GATHERINGS A PUPIL WAS CAUGHT STEALING.

Those pupils are also here – they are always everywhere, because man is so money-minded. And don't think that the one who was stealing was very much different from those from whom he was stealing; they were all in the same boat. Both are money-minded. One has the money, one does not have the money – that is the difference. But both are money-minded.

THE MATTER WAS REPORTED TO BANKEI WITH THE REQUEST THAT THE CULPRIT BE EXPELLED. BANKEI IGNORED THE CASE.

Why did he ignore the case? Because both are money-minded. Both are thieves – one thief trying to take things away from another thief, that's all.

In this world, if you hoard something you become a thief, if you have something you become a thief. There are two kinds of thieves in the world: one, respectable thieves, recognized by the state, sanctioned by the state, registered by the state, licensed by the state – and another, unlicensed people doing it on their own. Illegal stealing and legal. The legal ones are the respected ones; the illegal ones of course are not respected, because they go against the rules.

Those people who are very clever never go against the rules, they find out ways through the rules. But there are a few people who are not so clever. Seeing that if they follow these rules they will never have anything, they drop the rules and they start doing illegal things. But everybody is a money maniac. That's why Bankei ignored the case.

LATER THE PUPIL WAS CAUGHT IN A SIMILAR ACT, AND AGAIN BANKEI DISREGARDED THE MATTER.

He knows that both are in the same boat; there is not much difference.

You will be surprised to know that when a man succeeds in his criminal acts, he becomes respectable. Only if he fails, then he becomes a criminal. The successful robbers become kings, and the unsuccessful kings become robbers. It is only a question of who succeeds. If you are powerful, you are a great emperor. Now what is this Alexander, the great Alexander? A great robber – but he succeeded.

Your so-called politicians are all robbers. They try to destroy other robbers – they may be against smuggling, they may be against dacoity, they may be against this and that. But deep down they are

the greatest smugglers, the greatest dacoits. But they do things legally – or at least they manage to show that they are doing things legally. And they succeed – at least while they are in power. When the power goes, then all those beautiful stories about them simply disappear.

Once a politician is deposed, he becomes an ugly phenomenon. He may be a Richard Nixon or she may be an Indira Gandhi. Once a politician is deposed, once the power is gone, once the power is no more there to protect you, then everything becomes exposed. If you know how a person has become rich then you will not be able to respect him. But if the person is really rich he can manage to keep people silent. And then people have a very very small memory – they forget.

I was reading in some history book that twenty persons were expelled from England; they were sea robbers. And what happened after thirty years? Of all those twenty persons, a few of them went to Australia, and a few of them went to America. A few of them had become governors in America, a few of them had become bankers, great bankers, a few of them had become great landlords in Australia – all twenty had become very very respectable people. And they had founded great houses – all the great American houses belong to them.

That's why the master ignored. He didn't pay much attention, he didn't take any note of it. It's okay, this is how things go in the world. One who is not money-minded will ignore.

THIS ANGERED THE OTHER PUPILS, WHO DREW UP A PETITION ASKING FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THE THIEF, STATING THAT OTHERWISE THEY WOULD LEAVE IN A BODY.

Now, these people were not there to meditate at all. If you have come to meditate, you understand a few requirements – that you have to grow into less money-mindedness, that you have to attain a certain detachment from all your possessions. That it does not matter much that somebody has taken a few rupees – that it doesn't matter much, that it is not such a life-and-death affair. That you have to understand how the mind functions, how people are money-minded.

You are against the thief because he has taken YOUR money. But how was it yours? You must have taken it from somebody else in some other way – because nobody comes with money into the world, we all come empty-handed. So all that we possess we must be possessing, claiming, as our own. Nothing belongs to anybody. If a person has really come to meditate, this will be his attitude – that nothing belongs to anybody. He should start having less and less attachment to things.

But these people were money-minded. And when you are money-minded, naturally politics comes in. When they saw that the thief had been ignored twice, they must have thought, 'What kind of master is this? It seems he is in favour of the thief!' They could not understand why he is ignoring. He is ignoring just to show them that they have to drop their money-mindedness. Yes, his stealing is bad, but their money-mindedness is not good either.

When they saw that twice they had been ignored, they grew angry. They DREW UP A PETITION – politics comes in immediately, protest, petition – ASKING FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THE THIEF, STATING THAT OTHERWISE THEY WOULD LEAVE IN A BODY.

Now, they were not there to meditate at all. If they were really there to meditate, their approach towards this problem would have been totally different. They would have felt a little more compassion

for this man, for his lust for money. If they were real meditators they would have contributed some money and given it to this man – 'You please keep this money, rather than stealing.' That would have been an indication that they were there to meditate, to be transformed.

But now they drew up a petition asking for the dismissal of the thief. Not only that – with a threatening, that if he is not thrown out they will leave in a body.

You cannot threaten a master like Bankei.

WHEN BANKEI HAD READ THE PETITION HE CALLED EVERYONE BEFORE HIM. 'YOU ARE WISE BROTHERS' HE TOLD THEM. 'YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS NOT RIGHT. YOU MAY GO SOMEWHERE ELSE TO STUDY IF YOU WISH, BUT THIS POOR BROTHER DOES NOT EVEN KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG. WHO WILL TEACH HIM IF I DO NOT? I'M GOING TO KEEP HIM HERE EVEN IF ALL THE REST OF YOU LEAVE.'

Many things have to be understood. When the master says, 'You are wise brothers' he is simply ridiculing, he is simply hitting them hard. He is not saying, 'You are wise,' he is saying, 'You are utter fools.' But all fools think themselves wise. In fact, to think oneself wise is one of the basic requirements of being a fool. Wise people think they are not wise. Foolish people always think they are wise.

Now, these are all fools. They were not there to possess money, they were not there to have money – they were there to have something greater, something far higher. They have forgotten all about it. In fact, this man has given them an opportunity to see. If they were real meditators they would have gone to this man and thanked him – 'You have given us an opportunity to see how much we cling to money. How much you have disturbed us! We have completely forgotten all about meditation, we have forgotten for what we have come here. We have forgotten this master Bankei.'

They may have travelled for hundreds of miles, or thousands even – China is a big country. They must have travelled for months, because in those days travel was not so easy. They had come, they had heard about this master and they had come from long faraway places to study meditation with him. And somebody steals, and they have forgotten all. All that? They should have thanked the thief: 'You have brought something into our consciousness – some mad attachment to money has bubbled up, has surfaced.'

When Bankei says, 'You are wise brothers,' he is joking. He is saying, 'You are utter fools. But you think you are very wise, you think you know what is right and what is wrong. You have even been trying to teach me what is right and what is wrong. You are telling me, "You throw this man out, otherwise we will leave." You are trying to dictate terms to me. You think you know what is right and what is wrong? Then you can go anywhere – because you are so wise, you will be able to learn anywhere. But where will this man go? he is such a fool!'

See the point, the irony of it. The master says he is a fool and he is a poor fellow – THIS POOR BROTHER. Remember, the righteousness of the righteous is never very right. The people who think they are right are almost all stupid people. Life is so complex and life is so subtle that you cannot decide so easily that you are right and somebody else is wrong. In fact, a man who has a little understanding will see that he never falls into the trap of being righteous.

Jesus says to his disciples: 'The righteousness of the righteous is not enough – something is missing in it.' Now they think they know what is right and what is wrong, and this man has committed wrong, and the master has to throw him out. And if the master does not throw him out then the master is also wrong. Now they are too much into their wisdom – they think they know.

This is not the way to be near a master. They don't see the master's compassion, they don't see the master's meditation. They don't see that the master has become a Buddha – Bankei is one of the great masters of Zen. They don't see who is present before them, and they are protesting against him and they are threatening him.

Man is so foolish, he has done all kinds of foolish things down the ages. And the greatest foolish things have been committed whenever there is a Buddha – because you cannot understand, you cannot see who is confronting you. You go on in your childish and juvenile ways; you go on talking nonsense.

Bankei says, 'YOU ARE WISE BROTHERS, YOU KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS NOT RIGHT. YOU MAY GO SOMEWHERE ELSE TO STUDY IF YOU WISH, BUT THIS POOR BROTHER DOES NOT EVEN KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG. WHO WILL TEACH HIM IF I DO NOT? So you go, and I will keep him and I will teach him. I AM GOING TO KEEP HIM HERE EVEN IF ALL THE REST OF YOU LEAVE.'

Sometimes it happens that the man who thinks he is right is more difficult to teach than the man who thinks that he is not right. It is easier to teach a criminal than to teach a saint. It is easier to teach a man who feels deep down that he is doing something wrong – because he is ready to learn. He himself wants to get rid of this state. But a man who thinks 'I am doing right' – he does not want to get rid of this state, he is perfectly happy with it. It is impossible to change him.

Why does the master say, 'You all can go and I am going to keep this one man, this poor brother'? Why? Because this poor brother has a possibility, a potentiality.

It happened that one man, a great criminal, a murderer, a sinner, came to be initiated by Buddha. When he came he was afraid that people might not allow him entry, the disciples might not allow him to see Buddha. So he came at such a time when there were not too many people. And he didn't enter from the main gate, he jumped from a wall.

But by chance Buddha was not there – he had gone begging – and he was caught. And he said to the disciples, 'I have not come to steal or anything, I was just afraid that you wouldn't allow me through the main gate. Everybody knows me, I am a well-known figure around here. I am the most hated and feared man around here, everybody knows me. So you might not allow me, you might not believe that I want to become a sannyasin.'

So they took him to one of Buddha's great disciples, Sariputra – who was a great astrologer too, and who had a capacity, a telepathic capacity, to read people's past lives. So they asked Sariputra, 'Look into this man. We know that in this life he is a murderer, a sinner, a thief, and he has done all kinds of things. But maybe he has earned some virtue, some PUNYA, in his past lives – maybe that's why he wants to become a sannyasin. Just look into his past lives.'

And Sariputra looked into his eighty thousand past lives... and he was always the same! Even Sariputra started trembling, seeing this man. He is so dangerous – eighty thousand times a murderer, a criminal, always a sinner. He is an ESTABLISHED sinner! It is impossible – any change in this man is not possible. Even Buddha cannot do anything.

Sariputra said, 'Throw this man out, and take him away immediately – because even Buddha will be a failure with this man. He is an established sinner. Just as Buddha is an established Buddha, he is an established sinner. Eighty thousand lives I have seen, and I cannot go beyond that. Enough is enough!'

So the man was turned out. He felt so hurt, that there is no chance for him. Alive, he cannot be around Buddha. so he wanted to commit suicide. So just at the main gate around the corner he went to the wall and was going to hit his head against the stone wall to kill himself. And Buddha comes after his begging. And he sees that man, and he stops that man, and he takes him inside, and he initiates him.

And the story says that within seven days he became an ARHAT – within seven days he became an enlightened man. Now, everybody was very much puzzled. Sariputra went to Buddha and he said, 'What is this? Is all my astrology nonsense? And I looked into this man's eighty thousand lives! If this man can become enlightened in seven days, then what is the point of looking into people's past lives? Then it is all absurd. How can it happen?'

And Buddha said, 'You looked into his past, but you didn't look into his future. And the past is past! Any moment a man decides to change, he can change – the very decision is decisive. And when a man has lived eighty thousand lives of misery, he knows, and he hankers to change, and his intensity to change is infinite. Hence, in seven days....

'Sariputra, you have not yet become enlightened. You are a good man, you have good lives – you don't feel so much burdened with your past. You have a kind of righteousness around yourself. You have been a brahmin for many lives, a scholar, a respected person. But look at this man. He was burdened in all those eighty thousand lives, and he wanted to get free. He really wanted to get free. Hence, the miracle – within seven days he is out. The intensity of his past....'

This is one of the basic things to understand in people's transformation: people who feel guilty are easily transformed. People who feel good, right, are very difficult to transform. Religious people are very difficult to transform, irreligious people are easier to transform. So whenever a religious person comes to me I don't take much note of him. But whenever an irreligious person comes to me I'm really interested. I'm into him, I am with him, I am all for him – because there is a possibility.

That's why Bankei says:

'WHO WILL TEACH HIM IF I DO NOT? I AM GOING TO KEEP HIM HERE EVEN IF ALL THE REST OF YOU LEAVE.'

A TORRENT OF TEARS CLEANSED THE FACE OF THE BROTHER WHO HAD STOLEN. ALL DESIRE TO STEAL HAD VANISHED.

And in that shower of compassion from the master, the thief is no more a thief, he is utterly cleansed. He started crying, and those tears cleansed his heart. A TORRENT OF TEARS CLEANSED THE FACE OF THE BROTHER WHO HAD STOLEN, AND ALL DESIRE TO STEAL HAD VANISHED. This is the miracle of the presence of a master. And the story does not say anything about what happened to all those political people. This is the mystery of life. Never feel righteous, and never pretend that you are right – never get hooked into that idea. And never think about somebody else that he is wrong. Because both those things go together – if you feel yourself right, you are always condemning others and thinking somebody is wrong.

Never condemn anybody, and never go on praising yourself, otherwise you will miss. Accept howsoever people are. That is the way they are. And who are you to decide whether they are right or wrong? If they are wrong they suffer, if they are right they are blessed. But who are you to condemn?

Your condemnation brings a certain ego in you. That's why people talk too much about others' wrongness – it gives a feeling that they are right. Somebody is a murderer, and they have a good feeling: 'I am not a murderer – at least I am not a murderer.' And somebody is a thief, and they again feel good: 'I am not a thief.' And so on, so forth, their ego goes on strengthening. People talk about others' sins and about others' crime and others'.... All the wrong that goes on in others' lives, people go on talking about it. They exaggerate it. And they enjoy it – it all gives them a feeling that 'I am good.' But this feeling will become the barrier.

Be compassionate, be intelligent, be loving. Look at others with no judgement. And never start feeling righteous, never start feeling a kind of holiness. Never become a His Holiness or Her Holiness. Never.

Remain ordinary, remain nobody. And in your nobodiness comes the ultimate guest... in your nobodiness you become the host.

CHAPTER 4

Slipping Lazily into Divinity

24 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

Question 1

YOU OFTEN SPEAK ABOUT THE REAL, THE AUTHENTIC MAN. COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE REAL AND AUTHENTIC WOMAN... OR EVEN YOUR IDEAL WOMAN?

This old rotten habit of thinking about man and woman separately has to be dropped. They are not separate. Authenticity is authenticity – it does not matter whether a man is authentic or a woman is authentic. Spontaneity is spontaneity – it does not become feminine, it is not masculine.

The very idea of thinking of man and woman as separate beings has created a split in the human mind. Man is a unisex. Each man is woman and each woman is man too. We are human beings. Nobody is a man as such and nobody is a woman as such.

Once you divide, you are in trouble. Once you divide, then a thousand and one questions arise: who is superior? and who is to dominate? and who is to be dominate? Then humanity suffered long from male chauvinism. And there is a possibility that sooner or later humanity will suffer again – from female chauvinism. The Lib. people are working hard for it. They would like to do all the nasty things that men have done to them – they would like to do them to men. This is not going to help! You go on replacing one disease with another disease.

Woman has suffered much, that is true. But just by putting things upside-down, nothing is going to happen. Then man will start suffering. And this way the wheel goes on moving. If we really want to stop all this nonsense then we should start thinking about human beings, not about man and woman. That should be a very basic approach.

So when I am talking about authenticity or spontaneity or love, I am not considering man and woman as separate. They are one. They are parts of one whole, they are together. That's why there is a constant attraction between man and woman – because they both feel half. Man alone feels deprived, something is missing. Woman alone feels deprived, something is missing.

And it is so on many planes. There have been men, there have been women, we can think about them as if they were not in any need of the other. For example, a Buddha or a Mahavir. Now, we can think about Buddha that he does not need a woman, but that is not true. That is only so on the surface. His gestalt has changed – he is the master now, and he needs the disciples. Now the disciples function as the feminine – the active and the passive. He does not need a wife – that is true, that's certainly true – but that does not mean that he does not need the feminine. That simply means that on another plane the feminine has started asserting itself. Now the master needs the disciples, otherwise the master feels something is missing.

The disciple is the feminine. Even male disciples are feminine, because the attitude of a disciple is that of a receiver and the attitude of the master is that of a donor. The master gives, the disciple receives – that is the male/female asserting on a new plane.

It goes on in that way. It will be so always. Don't be deceived by the fact that Buddha no more needs a woman. Now he gets the feminine energy on a more subtle plane. And don't think that a Meera does not need the man. Now the man of her dream has become Krishna himself. She may not need the husband – who bothers about an ordinary husband when you can have Krishna as your husband? Now she lives on another plane; the ordinary husbands have disappeared, the ordinary lovers don't mean anything. But the male is there. Now the male is functioning as pure energy – as Krishna.

This is so. Never does it happen, never can it happen, that a man can be full alone or a woman can be full alone, because man-woman is a unity. Action-passivity is a unity, day-night is a unity, life-and-death is a unity. Life cannot exist without death, and death of course cannot exist without life. And so on and so forth.

So whenever I am talking about spontaneity, authenticity, love, I am not talking about men, I am not talking about women – I don't divide them. That is my fundamental approach. All divisions are dangerous, and all divisions create a kind of schizophrenia. Enough of it! Drop that very idea! Don't start moving to the other extreme. Man has suffered much – by 'man' I mean 'human being' – humanity has suffered much because of the division. The people who think they are trying to bring a new world, a new humanity, still go on thinking in the same old rotten way of division.

Just think of humanity. Don't think of east and west, don't think of black and white, and don't think of the oppressed and the oppressor. Start thinking in terms of oneness. That very approach will dissolve many problems.

But the question is significant: COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE REAL AND AUTHENTIC WOMAN... Woman or man – that doesn't matter... OR EVEN YOUR IDEAL WOMAN?

I have no ideals. I am a man without ideals. I am utterly iconoclastic – I destroy ideals. I believe that when there will be no ideal, man will be free. When there will be no goal, man will be free – never before it.

All ideals create slavery – because the ideal stands there in the future, it starts dominating you from the future. It starts condemning your present. It starts telling you that you are falling short: Become perfect! be this! be that! It brings a thousand and one shoulds and should-nots. With all those shoulds and should-nots, how can you imagine to live in freedom? They hamper you from everywhere, they limit you from every direction, they destroy you in every possible way – because they condemn your present. And there is only one way to live and that is in the present.

There is only one life and that is in this moment. If THIS moment is condemned in any way, by any method, your life is being destroyed. That's why there are millions of people on the earth but very few are alive. Ideals have poisoned their life. And the idealists are the great poisoners.

I am not an idealist, I believe in the real. And in fact you need not believe in the real; it is so. Belief is needed only for the ideal. For the real, what belief is needed? The sun rises – you don't say, 'I believe in the sunrise.' And the birds are singing – you don't say, 'I believe in the birds.' You believe in God because you can't see God, because God is not a reality. I don't believe in God, because for me God is as much a reality as the sunrise and these birds singing and these flowers and these trees and these people, you.

I don't believe in God. Belief presupposes that you don't know; belief presupposes ignorance. The very word 'belief' makes one thing certain – that it is not real. I am all for reality. That's what I mean when I say I believe in the real. I don't put any ideal in contrast with reality.

Down the ages, the ideal has been the most subtle trick to manipulate man – because the ideal creates guilt. You continuously think you are not coming up to the mark – you are falling short, you are below the level, you are not as you should be. And this becomes a rock on your heart. It cripples you, it paralyzes you. It does not allow you to move in freedom, it does not allow you to dance.

How can you celebrate life when there are so many ideals everywhere? And everywhere you feel limited – those limitations are created by the ideals. Whatever you do is never perfect. So whatsoever you do, it never makes you happy. In fact, whenever you do something it makes you unhappy – again you have proved your imperfection. Again you failed, again there is guilt, again there is condemnation, again you hate yourself. Each act brings more hatred, each act brings more and more self condemnation, rejection.

And if you don't love yourself, you are virtually dead – worse than being dead! If you don't love yourself, nobody is going to love you. How can anybody love you if you don't love yourself?

And the idealist cannot love himself; he is very hard, he is a masochist. And when a person is a masochist, when a person goes on torturing himself in the name of ideals – 'I should be like this'... and he is not, so he tortures himself. And he goes on pulling himself towards this impossible ideal. And all those ideals are impossible – their very nature is such, they cannot be fulfilled. That is the whole trick; if they can be fulfilled, they won't be ideals.

The ideal is by inner necessity unfulfillable; it is not possible to achieve it. Hence, it remains a dangling carrot in front of your eyes. And the donkey goes on moving... and the carrot goes on dangling. It is illusory. It is like the horizon far away – you go on moving, but you never reach; the horizon also goes on moving.

I am a realist. I am very down-to-earth. I want you to be grounded in the earth, it is your home. It is the way God is – God is very earthly. There is no other world, this is the only world. And there is no other way to be, this is the only way to be. This acceptance, this utter joy in being oneself – that's what I call the man of reality or the woman of reality. Utter joy in being oneself, as one is – with no guilt surrounding it, with no condemnation arising, with no idea how you should be. This is the way you are; this is the only way you can be. So you don't bring any opposition – you don't create a conflict, you don't create a friction between your reality and the ideal.

Out of friction, only ego is born and nothing else. The ego exists through friction. Have an ideal, and you will become an egoist. The idealist is an egoist. Have a bigger ideal, and you will be a bigger egoist. The greater the ideal, the greater the ego, because the greater is the friction. The ego is created by friction between the real and the ideal. Now you may have the ideal of egolessness – that doesn't matter. You may say, 'But I have the ideal of being egoless' – it does not matter, the ideal brings the ego. Now your idea of egolessness will bring great ego. So the REAL egoists are those who think they are humble people, who pretend that they are egoless.

The man who is egoless is the man who has no ideals. Let this be the criterion, and you have stumbled upon a fundamental. The man of no ego is the man of no ideals. Then how can the ego be created? – the very energy is missing. The energy comes out of friction, conflict, struggle, will.

When you accept your life – when you take your breakfast, and when you sleep and when you walk and when you take your bath – how can you create an ego out of these things? Sleeping when feeling sleepy, eating when feeling hungry, how can you create your ego? No – if you fast, you can create ego. If you are on a vigilance for the whole night, and you say, 'I am not going to sleep,' you can create the ego.

By the morning, the person who has slept well will have no ego, you will have a great ego. You were awake the whole night, and the sleep tried and tried and tried but you fought it. You are a warrior. You proved to your body, 'Mind over matter.' You proved that 'I am the master. Sleep cannot overtake me.' Then you can have the ego. Somebody is eating well – how can he have the ego? You are fasting. You are a Jain monk, you are fasting, a twenty-one days' fast. Every day, the ego is becoming bigger and bigger and bigger. And with the ego, obviously, everybody else becomes a sinner. All those people who are eating and enjoying their food are sinners. You condemn them. Only condemning them can you feel good. Only through condemnation can you feel the ego arising in you.

So first conflict, friction, brings ego. And ego brings condemnation of others, and you start feeling 'holier than thou'.

A man who has understood that the ideal brings the ego will drop all ideals. He will live a very natural life. Yes, natural, I say – not religious. To me, to be natural is to be religious. If your religion goes against nature it is not religion, you are simply in the service of the ego – you can call it whatsoever you like.

So I am all for the real, for that which is. And whatsoever you are, I would like you to accept it with great gratitude, and enjoy, and celebrate that you are. Don't ask for the impossible. By asking the impossible you miss the possible too. I say: Live the possible. And by living the possible, one day the impossible is simply attained with no effort.

If you think of the impossible you miss the possible, because your energy starts moving towards the impossible. If you don't think of the impossible at all, if you have nothing to think of at all, if you live the possible – a simple, natural, innocent life – how can the impossible escape you? Your whole energy moves into the present. And to be in the present is to be at the door of God. Your whole energy goes on knocking at the door... one day or other, like a flood you enter the divine. And the impossible becomes possible.

My idea of a real authentic man or woman is that of a natural being. Simple, not complicated. Complication comes from ideals. Innocent. And don't make innocence an ideal – remember, I am not talking about ideals. I am simply saying: Be like a child or like an animal, like the trees and the rocks.

And remember, I have to use a language which is very much polluted. So please don't misunderstand me. When I am saying be natural, don't create an ideal immediately in your mind – 'So now I have to be natural.' 'Have to be?' – you missed. You got hooked by the old language. I have to use language, so I say: Be like the trees – but I am not saying to go and stand outside in the garden and become a tree. Otherwise, again you have created an ideal. And again you will look... the leaves are not growing! So you start feeling guilty. And one never knows – one day suddenly you see leaves are growing. Then you become very egoistic. Then whosoever has no leaves growing is a sinner, destined to be thrown into hellfire. And you are going directly to heaven – you are growing leaves.

Look! Either way you will be in trouble. If you don't grow leaves you will be in trouble, if you grow leaves you will be in trouble. Either way you will be in hell. If you don't grow leaves you feel guilty, frustrated – again and again you open your eyes, and they are not growing yet. Or, one day – and miracles happen, remember – suddenly you see leaves are growing. Maybe they are not growing, you have simply imagined. For long you have been standing there, year in, year out, just thinking of one thing – how to grow leaves, you have to become a tree. And naturally, mind, by and by and by and by, becomes auto-hypnotized. A suggestion, continuous suggestion... by and by you start imagining things. One day you see leaves are growing. You have gone mad – the miracle has happened! Again you are in hell, because now you are mad.

Your saints are mad people. And your sinners are suffering because of these mad people. These mad people are the idealists. If you enjoy your food, there are people who will condemn. Mahatma Gandhi condemns – he preaches ASWAD, no taste. Now if you are tasting you are a sinner. Such a simple joy as taste is condemned. If you are in love with your woman you are a sinner. Down the ages, your mad saints have been condemning love. If you love your child you are a sinner.

I have heard about a Muslim saint, he must have been utterly neurotic. One day he was sitting with his grandchild in his lap – an old man talking to the boy, a small boy, must have been four, or five years old. And the boy asks, 'Grandpa, do you love God more, or me?' Because he sees this old man continuously repeating 'Allah, Allah, Allah!' So he asks, 'Do you love Allah more, or me?'

And the man was going to say, 'Of course, I love you!' The idea had arisen and then he became afraid – what is he saying! So he pushed the boy, threw the boy away from himself, and said, 'You nasty fellow! The Devil is speaking through you. I love God!'

And it is said, since that day he never talked to the boy. And it is praised in the books – that he was a great saint. He lived for twenty years still, but he never touched the boy again. The boy had become devilish, evil.

And the story says he went to heaven when he died. I suspect; I cannot purchase this. He must be in hell. Could he not see a simple thing – that the love of God does not deny any other love? In fact, the love of God is all your loves put together. This is a simple phenomenon. You love your wife, you love your child, you love your mother, you love your brother, you love your friend. These are not against God, these are ways of approaching God through different directions.

To me, that man is religious who can see it in this way. For him, all love is just like rivers falling into the same ocean. From all the directions love comes and falls into the same ocean.

If I had been there instead of that old man, I would have hugged the boy, kissed the boy. And I would tell him, 'I love you, and that is my way of loving God. You are part of God – there is no conflict between you and God! '

No two loves are ever in conflict, cannot be. If they are, then remember, they are not loves. Love is never in conflict. Other things are in conflict: ego, jealousy, possessiveness – yes, they are in conflict. But love is never in conflict.

Love knows no conflict. I don't condemn anything. When you eat, eat with great taste and sensitivity, and let that taste be your God in that moment. It is God in that moment. If you are eating an apple you are eating God, and this will be sheer insult not to eat with taste. Your mahatmas are always against God – that's my way of looking at things. If you are eating an apple, eat it with total taste. Be absorbed in the taste – because it is God that has come to you in the form of an apple. It is God! crystallized as an apple. The juice of the apple is God's juice: receive it in deep gratitude, love, joy, celebration.

Hold the apple in your hand, smell the apple. Hold the apple close to your cheeks and feel the coolness of it. Dance with the apple a little bit... soon the apple will become you. Receive it. Receive it with prayer and love and gratitude, let your heart be in total thankfulness. God has come to you as an apple, and God wants to become you. Soon you will digest God, and he will be running in your blood, and he will become your bone and your marrow, and he will become your thoughts and your dreams and your meditations and your love and your prayer.

Look in this way! This is what I mean by being real. God, to me, is not an ideal. God, to me, is the fundamental reality of life.

So, to me, there is no ideal man and no ideal woman. The ideal man and woman are neurotics – they need to be hospitalized. I don't carry any idea of perfection. I am very much against the idea of perfection, because that is the greatest calamity that has happened to man. I am for totality. Be total in your acts. Be total, whatsoever you are doing. And never think of perfection – because totality is in the present, and perfection is in the future.

The moment you bring in the future, you bring conflict. The moment you bring in the future, you bring tension, anguish, anxiety. The moment you bring in the future, you open the door of hell. Just be herenow! Be real, and be herenow, and live your life moment to moment in deep gratitude.

And whether you are a man or a woman, how does it matter? Authenticity, spontaneity, totality, are not feminine or masculine.

Question 2

HEY GOD! WHAT THE HELL ARE WE DOING HERE?

I don't know anything about you. I know only what I am doing here. About you, you will have to know what you are doing here. You can ask only one thing – what I am doing here.

I would like you to meditate on this beautiful poem of Eustace Owen: A BUTTERFLY. That's what I am doing here. Listen to it carefully.

A BUTTERFLY RESTED UPON A FLOWER,

GAY WAS HE AND LIGHT AS A FLAKE,

AND THERE HE MET A CATERPILLAR

SOBBING AS THOUGH HIS HEART WOULD BREAK;

IT HURT THE HAPPY BUTTERFLY

TO SEE A CATERPILLAR CRY.

SAID HE, 'WHATEVER IS THE MATTER?

AND MAY I HELP YOU IN ANY WAY?'

'I'VE LOST MY BROTHER,' WEPT THE OTHER,

'HE HAS BEEN UNWELL FOR MANY A DAY;

NOW I DISCOVER, SAD TO TELL,

HE'S ONLY A DEAD AND EMPTY SHELL.'

'UNHAPPY GRUB, BE DONE WITH WEEPING,

YOUR SICKLY BROTHER IS NOT DEAD:

HIS BODY'S STRONGER AND NO LONGER

CRAWLS LIKE A WORM, BUT FLIES INSTEAD.

HE DANCES THROUGH THE SUNNY HOURS

AND DRINKS SWEET NECTAR FROM THE FLOWERS.'

'AWAY, AWAY DECEITFUL VILLAIN,
GO TO THE WINDS WHERE YOU BELONG.

I WON'T BE GRIEVING AT YOUR LEAVING,
SO TAKE AWAY YOUR LYING TONGUE.

AM I A FOOLISH SLUG OR SNAIL,
TO SWALLOW SUCH A FAIRY TALE? '

'I'LL PROVE MY WORDS, YOU UNBELIEVER,
NOW LISTEN WELL, AND LOOK AT ME.

I AM NONE OTHER THAN YOUR BROTHER,
ALIVE AND WELL AND FANCY FREE.

SOON YOU'LL BE WITH ME IN THE SKIES
AMONG THE FLIRTING BUTTERFLIES.'

'AH!' CRIED THE MOURNFUL CATERPILLAR,
'TIS CLEAR I MUST BE SEEING THINGS.

YOU'RE ONLY A SPECTRE SIPPING NECTAR,
FLICKING YOUR ORNAMENTAL WINGS,
AND TALKING NONSENSE BY THE YARD.

I WILL NOT HEAR ANOTHER WORD'

THE BUTTERFLY GAVE UP THE STRUGGLE.

'I HAVE,' HE SAID, 'NO MORE TO SAY.'

HE SPREAD HIS SPLENDID WINGS AND ASCENDED
INTO THE AIR AND FLEW AWAY.

AND WHILE HE FLUTTERED FAR AND WIDE,
THE CATERPILLAR SAT AND CRIED.

I know what I am doing, I don't know what you are doing. You are all caterpillars. And I know you don't trust me, and I know you can't trust me – and I understand. It is impossible to trust me. How can a caterpillar trust a butterfly?

The caterpillar has not known anything like that, it is not his experience. He lives in a totally different dimension, on a different plane, in a separate reality. How can a caterpillar believe that some day he will fly into the skies? He only knows crawling on the ground. He is encaged in his shell, he knows nothing about his possible wings. He knows nothing about his potentiality. And man is an embryo, yet not born, yet in the womb.

And when somebody – a butterfly, a Buddha, a Christ – comes and tells you, it looks like a fairy-tale. It looks as if the Buddha is Lying. If I tell you 'I am God' it looks a lie, a fairy-tale. And I know why. You cannot believe that you can be a God – that's why. You cannot believe that you can have wings. When you cannot have wings, how can you believe somebody else has wings? And I look almost like you....

That was the problem with Buddha, that was the problem with Jesus. When Jesus said 'I am the son of God' people became very angry – caterpillars angry at the butterfly. And the caterpillars gathered together, and they killed the butterfly.

When Buddha said 'I am Bhagwan' the Hindus were very angry. They uprooted the whole Buddhist religion from India; they destroyed it utterly. In that way Hindus are more cunning than Jews. Jews killed Jesus – that is not much of a loss, because Christianity got rooted. Hindus didn't kill Buddha – they are more cunning people – they killed Buddhism. They allowed Buddha. They said, 'Okay, leave him alone. Just be indifferent to him, don't take any notice of him. If you take notice, he becomes important. If you fight against him, you give energy. If you kill him, people will remember him for thousands of years.'

That's what happened to Jesus' story – he was killed. And that's why two thousand years have passed, but Jesus is more alive than anybody else – more alive than Buddha, more alive than Mahavir, more alive than Krishna. Jesus holds more hearts close to him than anybody else. Why? He was killed. If he had been born in India, Hindus would have simply neglected him. And that would have been a sure death.

It is impossible to believe that which has not happened to you. So I know, if you trust me, that is a miracle. If you don't trust me, that is just natural. If you trust me you are showing great courage – you are adventurous, you are a dare-devil. If you don't trust me, if you doubt, you are simply an ordinary human being. Nothing wrong with it; it is normal, it is how the normal mind moves.

I KNOW what I am doing here. I am trying to bring this consciousness to you that you are a butterfly – that the whole sky is yours, that all the nectar of all the flowers is yours. But I don't know what you are doing here – that you have to decide. If you trust me, then you are using your time in a creative way. If you don't trust me, then you are simply wasting your time and wasting your energy.

Be here only if you trust me.

In a small school, the teacher asked the children, 'Give me one example of what you mean when you say "wastage of energy"?' Many examples were given, but I liked one example. A small boy stood up and said, 'Telling a hair-raising story to a bald-headed man. That is wastage of energy.'

I loved it... true.

Don't waste your energy. If you can trust me, be here, come with me, allow me to take you to some unknown lands. If you don't trust me then be somewhere else, do something else. If you have decided to remain caterpillars, it is your decision and I respect it. If you are not happy with being a caterpillar and you dream about being a butterfly, then come with me. It is possible – it has happened to me, it can happen to you. You have just to come out of your shell, you have just to drop your clinging to the shell. You have to drop your defence, your armour. You have to come out of your egg, the ego.

Question 3

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANALYSING AND UNDERSTANDING? IS IT NECESSARY TO LOOK AT THE PAST FOR UNDERSTANDING TO HAPPEN?

There is a lot of difference – not only a difference, they are diametrically opposite.

Analyzing is a mind phenomenon, understanding is a non-mind phenomenon. Analyzing, you remain in the mind, because you have to think. Analysis is thinking. Analysis is moving into reason, analysis is rational. Understanding has nothing to do with reason, understanding has nothing to do with thinking. Understanding is hovering above reason, moving beyond reason. Understanding is a pure look – just a pure look, with no idea to do anything. Analysis is not a pure look; there is a preoccupation, you have to analyze it.

And that is the whole difference between psychoanalysis and religion. Psychoanalysis teaches you analysis, religion teaches you understanding. If you go to a Freud or a Jung, he will teach you how to analyze your dreams, how to analyze your thoughts, how to sort it all out. If you go to a Buddha, he will simply teach you how to look, without any idea of doing anything – how to just look at the dream.

Don't even call it a dream, because if you call it a dream you have started analyzing. If you call it a dream you have brought in a category of reason. You say it is a dream, it is no more reality – analysis has started. You have categorized it, you have put it into a certain classification, analysis has started. Don't even call it a dream. And if you call it a beautiful dream, more analysis. If you call it a nightmare, more analysis. Don't say anything about it, don't make any judgement. Just watch it, unconcerned; just look into it.

And while looking into it without any concern, a great experience, an incredible experience, arises. When you simply look, without even a single word standing between you and the object that you are looking at, the object starts disappearing. Like a cloud it starts disappearing. It goes far and far away, it recedes back and back and back, and a moment comes, suddenly it is not there. You are left alone, without any content.

This is what meditation is all about – to be conscious without a content. And the way to drop the content is not the way of analysis, it is the way of the pure look.

So there is no need to analyze. If you analyze, you are moving into a process which can continue ad infinitum. There is no end to it – one thing leads to another. If you analyze one dream you will

have to analyze your whole life. And then too the process is not finished; you will have to go back into your past lives. That has happened – in India that has happened.

Freud started something which is not a discovery, which is a rediscovery. Freud started analyzing, and then sooner or later many other things came in the wake of it: primal therapy. Once you start analyzing a single dream that you had last night, you will have to go sooner or later to your very birth scream to understand this small dream. Because everything is connected; this dream is not just out of the blue. The dream that you had seen last night is connected with many things in the past – you will have to analyze them. And they are connected in their own turn with something else – you will have to analyze them... and so on and so forth.

If really you want to analyze a man, you will have to analyze the whole of existence. Because if your father was not there in the world, you would not have been here. And your father may have met your mother just accidentally, because they happened to study in the same school. If that school was not there, you would not be here.

Even if the school was there but there was co-education, you may not have been here. Because when there is no co-education people fall in love more – when there is co-education, who bothers? When there is co-education there is less romance. When children are kept apart – boys separate from girls – girls become fantastically beautiful, boys become fantastically beautiful. The separation creates illusions.

And so on and so forth – you can go backwards to the very beginning of the universe. Not only to the primal scream, you will have to go to God's scream – the first scream, when he said: 'Let there be light!' My own feeling is that when he uttered the first words, they were not 'Let there be light' – somebody has misunderstood. He said, 'Let there be logic!' And since then man has been in trouble. Light is not such a trouble: 'Let there be logic.'

This world that we live in is a logical construct. Analysis won't help; you can go on for ever. That's why analysis is prolonged. If you fall into the trap of a Freudian, three years, six years, ten years, it can continue – it depends on how much you can afford. The analysis never ends, only your bank balance. When the bank balance is finished the analyst says, 'Now it is finished.' Otherwise it continues, because analysis has no beginning and no end. It is a circle – you can go on moving and moving.

LOOK! is breaking the circle. Just looking, staring into things. Not figuring out what is what, just looking into things as they are. Just looking, a pure look... and suddenly all clouds start dispersing, evaporating. And soon your pure look has created the pure space around you.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANALYSING AND UNDERSTANDING?

Analysis is of the mind; it is an exercise of logic, reason, thinking. Understanding is not of the mind at all; it is a pure witnessing. You simply see. The mind is there all around you, and you see from the center. The mind is all around you, many clouds moving, traffic, rush hour... you see it, but you are the seer. You are not troubled by it; there is nothing to be troubled about. A few empty thoughts floating around you – why be troubled? And why get into analysis? Those empty thoughts are just empty thoughts, forms flickering around. Let them flicker. You remain settled in your being, you remain centered, you remain at the very core.

This is what is called witnessing. And witnessing is the technique, the ultimate technique, of all spiritual understanding. Just SEE.

Zen masters end their talks with a shout: 'San!' San! means Look! That is the final touch to their every talk – and with a shout, so nobody is allowed to remain sleepy. It is almost a lion's roar: Look! Into what? – that is not the point. Just look – anything will do. When you are looking at the trees, just look. Don't say this is an ashoka tree and that is a cypress tree. Don't say that the tree is beautiful and don't say the tree is green, very green, and don't say that the gulmohr is flowering. Don't say anything, that the flowers are red... don't SAY at all. Just LOOK!

Let words disappear. Let there be you and the phenomenon of the trees. Or you and the phenomenon of your woman or your man, your friend – people. Let there be just reality. And have a look. And suddenly you will start having a few moments, great moments. Great moments of timelessness, great moments of vision, clarity, transparency. Great moments when suddenly everything stops. And when you simply see, a pure vision arises – the same vision that may have been there when you were born, and for the first time you opened your eyes....

There was no word. You must have seen colours, obviously. You must have seen the man standing there, the doctor. You must have seen your mother, or the nurse. You must have seen the clock on the wall, you must have seen the electric light – but there was no way to use any word. You could not have said, 'This is electricity.' The electricity was there, but there was no word forming in you. You could not have said, 'Beautiful! the room is good, well-furnished' – you could not have said that. You could not have said to the doctor, 'Hello, Doctor, how are you?'

Everything was there – only words were missing. But you must have seen – eyes were not missing. That's what I mean by 'look', that's what Zen masters mean when they shout: San!

Bring that look back. It can be brought, because you KNOW it. You HAD it – you have only forgotten, you have put it aside. You are clinging to JUNK, and you have put aside the diamond.

I have heard about a very great king. One day on the road, passing on the road, he came across a beggar. He recognized suddenly that he was his friend – they had studied in the same school. What had happened to this man?

He took him back home. The poor man was given a good massage and a good bath, good food – and the king himself was serving him – and valuable drinks. And the poor man ate too much and drank too much and fell asleep at the table.

At that moment the king felt very sorry for him. They had lived together, they had studied together in school when they were children... he took out a great diamond from his pocket and slipped it into the pocket of the beggar.

By the morning, when he came back from his long sleep, the beggar departed very happy. The king didn't say anything about the diamond because it might be embarrassing to the beggar. And he knew the man, a very proud man – he would not like the idea. So he simply put it in the pocket and didn't say anything.

After three, four days he came across the beggar again, and he was begging in the marketplace. So he came to him, and he said, 'Why are you begging? What is the point of it?'

And the beggar said, 'What should I do? Just because for one day you gave me food and good drinks and a good bed to sleep in, I cannot live on it for ever. I have to beg, I am a poor man.'

And the king said, 'What happened? I slipped a diamond into your pocket.'

And the poor man looked into the pocket and it was there. But for these three days he had not looked into the pocket at all. It is not good to look into your pocket when you don't have anything, it is very embarrassing – again and again to put your hand into the pocket and find nothing, an emptiness. So he had not looked, he had not bothered. There was nothing; he knew it well, there was nothing.

Exactly that is the case: you have put aside the diamond. You brought it with you. When you were coming from God's house he slipped a diamond into you. He always gives a diamond to everybody who comes to the world – of such great value that all is possible through that diamond. All treasures of the world are possible through that diamond, a man can become a Buddha through that diamond. That diamond has some magic in it. You came with it – you have not looked inside yourself.

No, analysis is not needed. If you analyze, you will miss the diamond. Only look, just look. Become watchful, become very alert – bring more awareness, but no analysis. Just see. And by and by, small moments will come – valuable moments, precious moments, diamond-like. And they go on growing. Once you have the taste, it becomes easier. Once you know they are there, they come more – because you recognize them more. Then they start growing. Then small intervals come – half an hour, and no thought arises. One hour passes by, and you are simply sitting there and no thought arises.

That's what paradise is! That's what heaven is! You are entering into a different dimension: the caterpillar is growing wings.

But look. Understanding has nothing to do with analysis.

Question 4

THE LECTURES ON ZEN DELIGHT ME TO NO END. I FEEL MYSELF FALLING IN TUNE WITH IT MORE AND MORE. BUT IT SEEMS SO EASY. AM I BECOMING LAZY? I THOUGHT SPIRITUALITY IS SUPPOSED TO BE ARDUOUS – NOT A FREE AND EASY LET-GO.

Yes, it has been supposed so – by the sadists, by the people who like to torture other people. In fact, you have been brought up with this idea, you have been fed this idea from your mother's milk – that all that is joyful has to be earned by great effort. Joy has to be earned, bliss is a long way away. One has to travel, and the journey is arduous and uphill.

It is sheer nonsense. Joy is here now! And one needs only one thing to be joyful, and that is: Be joyful. Nothing else, no other requirement.

Joy is not a goal. God is not a goal, God is already the case. God has happened to you – you are carrying him within yourself. This is the Zen emphasis. Zen does not say that you have to

go somewhere to find him. He is not hiding, he is not playing hide-and-seek. He is not sitting somewhere in the caves of the Himalayas, he is sitting in the cave of your heart! Don't go to the Himalayas, look within yourself. And that look needs no preparation, that look needs no requirement. Nothing is presupposed; as you are, you are capable of it. This is the Zen emphasis, this is the Zen revolution.

Zen does not teach that truth is difficult. Lies are difficult. They have to be difficult, because they are lies – you have to maintain them. For one lie, you have to tell a thousand lies. To protect one lie you have to become a liar, you have to create your whole life according to one lie. Tell one lie, and then see what happens – you are telling a thousand and one lies to protect one. And then what will happen to these thousand and one lies? Each lie will be protected by another thousand and one.

Lies are difficult, truth is simple. Truth is already the case. Truth is there – truth is showering in the sun, truth is raining all over the place. Wherever you are, truth is available. You are not to go, you are not to even take a single step! – and the journey is over. You have to just become silent and aware of it.

Yes, let-go is the door. Drop all that rubbish that you have been taught.

The society is dominated by the sadists – they always say it is difficult; they make everything difficult. If something is easy, it is worthless. If something is easy, why is it worthless? Because an easy thing does not give you the sense of ego. So everything has to be made difficult. Life is to be made a hurdle race – difficulties have to be created on your path so you can have a feeling that you have achieved.

The ego can arise only when there are difficulties, and the ego is the greatest barrier to God. So God cannot be difficult – one thing is certain, the mathematics is very simple. Ego needs difficulties, ego feeds on difficulties. The more difficult a thing, the more ego feels the pull towards it – more attracted, magnetically pulled. Difficult, hard, unapproachable, unachievable, impossible, and the ego becomes tremendously excited. 'This is the thing to do, because nobody else can do it. If I can do it, I will be at the top.'

Ego needs difficulties, and our whole society is structured according to the ego. The deepest philosophy of all the cultures in the world is ego. Whatsoever they say, notwithstanding that, deep down all societies exist around the idea of the ego: make things difficult, make things as difficult as possible. So the idea has got roots in you.

Truth is not difficult, love is not difficult, joy is not difficult. You have just to start living it. And nothing is missing, not a single thing is missing. Everything is ready, you have to just start.

Don't feel puzzled because it seems so easy. It is the easiest thing in the world – if you are simple, it is the easiest thing in the world. If you are difficult, then of course you make it difficult; if you are complex, you make it complex.

AM I BECOMING LAZY? Laziness is also very much condemned. It should not be so much condemned. Lazy people have not done anything wrong in the world – you can look into history. Lazy people have been the best kind of people in the world. A lazy person cannot become an

Adolf Hitler or a Khan. A lazy person cannot become Tamurlaine, a lazy person cannot become a Nadirshah, a lazy person cannot become this and that. A lazy person can only become Lao Tzu. If he wants to become anything, he can become only Lao Tzu.

Laziness, in itself, has nothing wrong in it. But we are dominated by an ethos of action, work, aggression. We are dominated by people who should be called 'The Achievers'. Of course, if you want to achieve something you cannot be lazy, certainly. If you want to have more money than others, you cannot be lazy – money won't come that way. Money never comes to lazy people, that's certain.

If you want to become a prime minister, it does not happen easily; you have to work hard for it. You have to go to jail, and you have to be beaten by the police, and all that is on the way. Mm? That is how one reaches Delhi. That's how Morarji becomes prime minister. You have to go on a fast, and do a thousand and one things and create trouble and chaos. You have to learn many many things. You have to go on creating disturbance for those who are in power – you have to create such difficulties that they start thinking, 'It will be better if this power is taken away from us.' You have to create such a situation where they will feel relieved if somebody else takes this power from them. If you want to go to Delhi or to Washington or to London, you have to work hard; you cannot be lazy. If you want to become a Rockefeller or a Morgan, you have to work hard.

But to achieve God, the achiever's mind itself is not needed. You can be lazy and you can slip into divinity. In fact you can slip into divinity more easily if you are lazy. To me laziness is nothing wrong. I am not saying to you 'Become lazy' – I am simply saying that there is no 'disvaluation' in laziness. If you feel in tune with laziness, be lazy. If you feel in tune with action, be active. If an active person wants to become lazy it will be difficult, very difficult, for him. If a lazy person wants to become active it will be very difficult – it will be an impossible task.

I am not in favour that you should become anybody else that you are not. I accept you as you are. If you are lazy, perfectly good, there is a way for the lazy man too. You have to choose your guides rightly – Lao Tzu or me. Then don't choose Mahavira, he won't help. He was a warrior, he was a KSHATRIYA, and he knew only how to fight. So when he finally came across God, he fought with God too. Hence his name, Mahavira – 'the great brave man'. Hence his system is called 'Jaina' – it means 'the system that helps you to conquer'. 'Mahavira' means the conqueror, and 'Jaina' means the methodology to conquer. Even with truth he is a conqueror, a warrior. That is the path of the will and action.

If you are basically in your element a KSHATRIYA, a samurai, a warrior, then choose Mahavir – then he is the right guide. But you need not feel depressed if you are not a KSHATRIYA. If you are a lazy man, perfectly good – there are guides available for you too. And my own feeling is that many more people have attained to God through surrender than through will. It is not an accident that Mahavira could not get many followers; it is not accidental that through Mahavira many people have not attained to truth. Many more attained through Lao Tzu, many more attained through Buddha.

Buddha is a strange case. For six years he was just like Mahavira. For six years he tried hard, he went almost half the way on the path of will. Mahavira worked for twelve years and attained. On the same route, Buddha worked for six years and came to understand that 'This is not for me.' He did hard work. He was also, at least by birth, a born KSHATRIYA, a born warrior. But he seems to be a

different kind of man; it was not his natural element. After six years he understood that all this effort is meaningless. He relaxed. And the night he relaxed, he attained. So he is a strange case. He worked for six years, hard – and then one night he dropped all effort, he relaxed, he became lazy. That night he slept, without any desire to attain anything; he accepted his hopeless state. And in that hopelessness is born his enlightenment. He is half Mahavira and half Lao Tzu.

And Buddha has helped millions of people – more than anybody else. The reason may be this, that for a few people those six years may be helpful – so they go on that, and a path called HINAYANA is created. That is the path of the will. For others, he has the other approach also available, the other door also available – the MAHAYANA. Those who cannot struggle hard, those who don't feel like fighting with truth – those who want to surrender and become receptive, those who want to be feminine, womb-like, and would like to receive the truth whenever it comes, and are ready to relax and wait – yes, they can also attain through Buddha.

Mahavira is one pole, will. Lao Tzu is another pole, surrender. Buddha is just in the middle – half Mahavira, half Lao Tzu. That's the reason he has been able to help many more people – many more than Lao Tzu, many more than Mahavira. He is a great synthesis. A few people who want to struggle, they follow his first six years, they don't talk about the last night. Hence, there are two kinds of stories.

Just the other day, Maitreya asked a question – I was waiting for the right moment to answer it. There are two stories of how Buddha attained. One story, the HINAYANA story – the people who follow the path of will, that is their story. They say: After six years he sat under the Bodhi tree, with absolute determination that if enlightenment does not happen now, he will not leave this place. He will not move, he will not open his eyes, he will not go begging. He will die, sitting in this place, if enlightenment does not happen. He staked all. And by the morning he became enlightened.

This is the HINAYANA story, the path of the will. For six years he worked hard, but it was not total. The ultimate culmination comes with total determination, with total will – that now he will die. Either it happens, or he will die – but he is not going to move from here. This utter determination is one story.

The other story is the MAHAYANA story – the story of the lazy people, the story of those who follow the path of surrender, effortlessness. They say: After six years, the same night, he became enlightened. The night is the same but the stories differ; it depends on the interpretation. The same night, they say, after six years – about the six years there is no difference of opinion. The last night is the problem, what actually happened. And Buddha has not said anything of what actually happened. These two stories have been there always. And with these stories, Buddhism divided into two religions, HINAYANA and MAHAYANA – the arduous path, and the path of surrender.

The MAHAYANA story is that Buddha, after six years, came to realize that all effort is meaningless. Truth cannot be achieved by achieving, because in the very idea of achieving, ego remains – the achiever remains. Understanding this, he dropped the very idea. He forgot all about achievement, he relaxed. He said: 'No more.' He had dropped out of the world one day; money, power, prestige – he had dropped those goals. Then he had put all his energies into one goal – enlightenment, NIRVANA. Now he saw the point, that this is again an ego-goal, again an ego-trip: 'I am again trying to achieve something.' Seeing this, he must have laughed. He dropped that idea too; he relaxed.

That night a young woman had come to worship the tree. She was a worshipper of the tree, a pagan. And it was a full-moon night and she had come with KHEER, a sweet made from milk and rice, to pour on the roots of the tree. The full moon was there, and she saw this beautiful man, this utterly beautiful man, sitting there. And she thought, she imagined, 'It must be the god of the tree who has taken this form, who has become real for me.' For years she had been worshipping the tree, and she thought, 'My prayers have been accepted.'

So she presented the KHEER to Buddha. Had she gone one day before, he would have thrown it away – KHEER IS a luxury for an ascetic, an ascetic does not eat things like KHEER. He would have said no. He would not have even looked at the woman – an ascetic does not look at women. But he accepted it, he drank the kheer. His body must have felt, after many many years, very satisfied. And then he fell into a great sleep.

When you are too desirous of attaining something, sleep is always disturbed, because the desire goes on disturbing it – it remains a constant hangover there. Buddha slept for the first time. No desire left, no dream is possible any more – because dreams are there only because you have some desires to fulfill. Your desires stir dreams in your consciousness.

That night, the body satisfied tremendously, after many years... the cool breeze, the full-moon night, the shade of the tree... he fell asleep, with no dreams, with no disturbance. The sleep was total. And when in the morning he opened his eyes.... The mahayana sutra does not exactly say 'He opened his eyes', the mahayana sutra says 'When he found his eyes opening' – so relaxed that he will not even open his eyes any more.

When he found his eyes opening – because out of rest, naturally a moment comes when the eyes will open – when he found his eyes opening, he saw the last star disappearing in the sky. The morning was coming, the last star was disappearing... and with the disappearance of the last star, his ego also disappeared. He became enlightened.

Enlightenment happened on the same full-moon night. How it happened, there are two interpretations. My own choice is for the second. But if you are a man of will and action, you can choose the first – nothing is wrong in it. My own choice is of the second.

Question 5

I HAVE VISITED MANY ASHRAMAS, BUT EVERYWHERE MEN AND WOMEN ARE KEPT APART – EXCEPT HERE.

WHY?

Because this is an ashrama for human beings. Not for men, not for women, – we don't make any distinction. Differences are there between men and women, but there are no distinctions. Differences are there, and those differences are beautiful. Because of those differences they remain interested in each other, and the whole play of life continues.

You may have visited ashramas, those ashramas don't belong to this century. Those ashramas are hang-ups from the past, they are not contemporary. They should have disappeared at least three thousand years before. They are relics of the past, museum-pieces at the most, utterly meaningless.

This ashrama belongs to this moment. And this ashrama is the ashrama of the future, too. Here, something new is opening, something utterly new – something that is needed, something that humanity needs now. This ashrama is a contemporary place.

So, coming from Sivananda's ashrama in Rishikesh to this ashrama you are not only travelling by train, you are travelling in time. Three thousand years you have travelled from Rishikesh to Poona! It is difficult – the train journey is only of twenty-four hours, but to travel three thousand years is a difficult thing. Unless you are very very alert, you will not be able to enter into this place.

This place is a new place. It is not a traditional place, it is a potential place. It is not a by-product of the past, it is a seed for the future and a source.

People who are afraid of women are afraid of reality, are afraid of themselves. People who are afraid of women are really afraid of life itself – because the woman IS life. People who are afraid of women are afraid of love. This kind of people is basically unintelligent, stupid. They don't have any possibility to grow into intelligence, awareness, into radiance. They cannot become celebrants. They may become celibates but they cannot become celebrants, they cannot celebrate life.

And, to me, celibacy comes only after celebration. It is the culmination of celebration. When you have loved each other, when the man has known the woman and woman has known the man – absolutely known – then there comes a transcendence. Then the man is no more man, and the woman is no more woman. This is what we call the Buddha-state, the enlightened state. Then you are no more part of any duality; you have become whole.

And remember always, wherever there is life there is love. And wherever there is life, and all the play of life, and the LEELA of life, men and women have to be together. Men alone become sad, women alone become sad. Together, energy flows. Together, energy dances. Together, it is natural that the energy should flow.

I have heard:

The professor was a sworn enemy of co-education. 'It is impossible,' he told a group of friends, 'to teach a young man mathematics if there is a girl in the class.'

'Come now, professor,' someone objected, 'surely there must be an exception to that?'

'There might be,' snapped the professor, 'but he would not be worth teaching.'

Yes, that is right. If a man is not interested in women, he is not interested in beauty, he is not interested in grace, he is not interested in passivity, he is not interested in rest. He is not worth teaching; he is not an intelligent being at all.

An intelligent being never escapes from anywhere. Whatsoever God gives him, he uses that opportunity, he uses it to its very core. He uses EVERY opportunity in a positive way. And then every stone on the path becomes a step towards God.

CHAPTER 5

The White Flame of Life

25 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

A GREAT JAPANESE WARRIOR NAMED NOBUNAGA DECIDED TO ATTACK THE ENEMY ALTHOUGH HE HAD ONLY ONE-TENTH THE NUMBER OF MEN THE OPPOSITION COMMANDED. HE KNEW THAT HE WOULD WIN, BUT HIS SOLDIERS WERE IN DOUBT.

ON THE WAY HE STOPPED AT A SHINTO SHRINE AND TOLD HIS MEN: 'AFTER I VISIT THE SHRINE I WILL TOSS A COIN. IF HEADS COMES, WE WILL WIN; IF TAILS, WE LOSE. DESTINY HOLDS US IN HER HAND.'

NOBUNAGA ENTERED THE SHRINE AND OFFERED SILENT PRAYER. HE CAME FORTH AND TOSSSED A COIN. HEADS APPEARED. HIS SOLDIERS WERE SO EAGER TO FIGHT THAT THEY WON THEIR BATTLE EASILY.

'NO ONE CAN CHANGE THE HAND OF DESTINY,' HIS ATTENDANT TOLD HIM AFTER THE BATTLE.

'INDEED NOT,' SAID NOBUNAGA, SHOWING A COIN WHICH HAD BEEN DOUBLED, WITH HEADS FACING EITHER WAY.

This is one of the fundamentals of Zen – that all is a mind construct, that whatsoever we know is nothing but a mind-projection. That the so-called reality is not really real. It appears real because we believe that it is real – it is belief that creates reality. At the source of all so-called realities is nothing but your belief. If you believe, it is so. If you don't believe, it is no more so.

Zen says the mind is the SANSAR, the world, and the mind is NIRVANA too. It is all a mind-game. And remember, en says it is all a mind-game – with no exception. Even your God is the ultimate mind-game, the meta-game. This is where Zen is very superior to other religions.

Other religions say the world is a mind-game, but they don't say MOKSHA is a mind-game. Other religions say the material world, the world of money and power and prestige, is a mind-game – but they don't say that God, heaven, virtue, are mind-games. It is here that Zen is the ultimate religion. It says all is a mind-game. 'All' is ALL – whatsoever Zen says, it means. Mind includes everything that you can know, mind includes everything that you can experience, mind includes everything that is possible.

Then is there any way to know the real which is not a mind-game? There is a way, arid that is to drop the mind itself. When the mind is dropped, the reality is there. While the mind persists, it goes on creating its own reality. And that reality which is there when mind is dropped cannot be expressed through the mind.

That's why Zen is absolutely silent about God. Not that God is not – but the God that we can talk about will be a mind-game, it will be our projection. Meera projects Krishna, Theresa projects Christ, Ramakrishna projects Mother Kali – but these are all projections. Beautiful projections. Obviously, when Meera is seeing Krishna playing on his flute it is a beautiful dream – but it is a dream, Zen says. It is imagination. You can put so much in it that it can become more real than you. But this reality is created by you, it is invented by you.

Meera will not see Christ, that is not her investment. And Theresa will not see Krishna, that is not her investment. A Christian goes on seeing Christ, and a Buddhist goes on seeing Buddha. Whatsoever you believe, you can see. If you believe hard enough, it becomes real. But this reality is just a relative reality, an invented reality. There is not much difference between it and dreaming.

Every night you invent a reality, and while you are dreaming it looks so real, so authentically real. Every morning you find it was false. Millions of times you have found it was false – but again you will go to sleep tonight and again it will be real. The mind will again play the game.

Even absurd dreams look real, which are not possible, not at all possible. A rock suddenly becomes a dog... a dog starts talking to you... but in the dream it is real. Where is your logic? Where is your reason? Where have all your experiences of the past gone? You are again deceived.

Zen says the same is happening even while you are awake. Your so-called awakening is not much of an awareness, it is happening then too. You see a woman and you call her beautiful. Maybe you are simply projecting beauty. Maybe you are seeing things which are not there. That's what Buddha says – because how can there be beauty in the body? And how can there be beauty in bones, flesh, blood? All kinds of diseases are hiding there. Death is growing there... but you see beauty. You believe. When you believe, it is there; when the belief disappears, all beauty disappears.

Watch it. You are constantly creating your own world. We live in different worlds because we live in different dreams, and we live in different worlds because we live in different belief-systems. A Hindu has a different belief-system, reality comes in a different way to him. A Mohammedan has a different belief-system, reality comes in a different way to him. What is real for a Hindu is absurd

for a Mohammedan, and what is real for the Mohammedan is absurd for the Hindu. They may be neighbours, they may be friends, but they belong to different belief-systems.

So is there a way to know the real? Yes, there is a way. Zen says: Drop all belief-systems. That's what Krishnamurti goes on insisting – drop all belief-systems, then you can know. But there is no way to say that which you will know there, because there the known and the knower are no more separate. There the experiencer and the experienced are no more separate.

Hence, Zen says, SAMADHI is not an experience. God is not an experience, enlightenment is not an experience – because experiences happen in the mind, and these things happen beyond the mind. If they are experiences then they are again part of your belief.

Listening to me, you can start having experiences of SATORI. Listening to me continuously, you can create a belief-system – a strong projector. Every day listening, meditating, listening, meditating, one thing again and again becomes a constant repetition in the mind – creates a groove, a rut, becomes deeper every day. One day suddenly you experience SATORI has happened. But if it is an experience it is not the real SATORI. If you can experience it, if you can see it happening, then it is not satori – because you are there separate. Wherever you are separate from your experience, the thing that separates you is the mind.

So God cannot be an experience and samadhi cannot be an experience and truth cannot be an experience. Mind disappears, all experience disappears. Suddenly reality is there – but you are no more separate from it to KNOW it. You are it.

This is a beautiful parable. Before we enter into it, a few things have to be understood.

Master Takan was dying – a great Zen master, very much loved by his disciples. His disciples asked that he should write a death poem. In Zen it is traditional, whenever a master dies, as his last utterance he writes a death poem. It is beautiful, very indicative. Death should be a poetry, death should be a celebration, a song. And when a master is departing, when he is saying goodbye to all those who have been with him and who have been working with him and who have been growing through him – to all his children – he leaves his last legacy in a song. Maybe two lines, four lines – a small haiku. But that is his gift.

So they write death poems. And disciples ask – when they see that the master is on the verge to leave them, they say, 'The last thing is, give us a song.' Death should happen with a song – that is the meaning. Death should not be a sad affair, it should be a joy. And masters have sung beautiful songs. They have to be spontaneous because the master may not be a poet at all, he may not have composed a poem ever. But when such a great phenomenon as death is there everybody becomes a poet, if you are alert.

It is such a beautiful experience. To pass through death is to pass through utter relaxation, to enter into death is to enter into a non-tense rest. Everything starts becoming lax, everything starts dropping. And one is ready for the journey, and the boat has come to the shore... and the unknown surrounds... and the mysterious is all around. Even one who has never been a poet and has never written a poem, will utter something.

So they asked Master Takan to write a death poem. He refused. But when they insisted, he wrote the character YUME – it means 'dream' – and died.

Many death poems have been written, but nothing to compare with Master Takan: YUME – dream. Life and death both are dreams: that is his last verdict. It is very definitive. That's what Hindu mystics have always said – MAYA. It is not THERE; it is there because you want it there. The mind is tremendously creative, the mind is the real creator. It goes on creating – it goes on creating anything that you want to create, it makes everything available to you. You have just to be dreaming, and reality starts changing around you.

But it is all dream. Life is dream, death is dream, God is dream. ALL is dream. Just one thing is not a dream – that is the consciousness upon which this dream happens, to which this dream happens.

You go to a movie and you see a dream projected on the screen. The screen is empty and there is nothing – just light and shadow. But you get involved, you get very much involved. You sometimes cry, sometimes your heart starts palpitating. Sometimes you laugh, sometimes you become very tense, sometimes you relax. You move with the story, you become part of the story. And you KNOW – that tacit knowing is there, that it is all a dream. But still you go on forgetting. You again and again forget – in fact you call that film the best in which you completely forget that it is just a film. The best film is that which does not allow you any remembrance that it is unreal. The best story-writer, the best story-teller, is one whose story, when he is telling it, becomes real – you start living it.

The movie moves you. It moves your emotions, you become involved. Tears flow, laughter comes, you become affected. It is no more unreal – otherwise how are you affected? If it was unreal, you would not be crying. You have forgotten the truth, that it is a projection.

This forgetfulness is what we call life. You have paid for this film – to see something unreal becoming real. And there are people who will pay even to see a very horrible tragedy, who will go to see a horrible story which will be just a torture and nothing else. And they pay for it, and they are affected by it. They live in hell for three hours. And they say the story was beautiful, it was tremendously real. In the same proportion as they are affected by it, it becomes real. If you are not affected by it at all, it remains unreal.

When you are affected, what happens? You are no more a spectator, you have become part of it. People start getting identified with the actors. Next time you go to a movie, just see – you must have become identified with somebody. Now his success is your success, his failure is your failure. His love is your love, his tragedy is your tragedy. When he laughs you laugh, when he cries you cry – you become identified with some part of the movie. It becomes your story. For a few moments you drop out of your life and you become part of the life of these strange people who are moving on the screen.

After three hours, when you are coming back home, suddenly you remember it was all just a story – you need not be worried about it. You need not carry the worry to your home, you need not disturb your sleep. You start laughing again – you are getting out of it. But these three hours while you were inside the movie-house, you were not only inside the movie-house, you were inside the movie. You had become part of it. You were not a spectator, you had become a participant.

Next time you go, watch. If you remain a spectator you will remain unaffected, because the spectator will go on knowing that this is just nothing. Nothing is happening. The moment you become a participant, it is no more just nothing, it has become everything. Here you lose awareness, and there the dream becomes real. Here you gain awareness, and the dream becomes a dream.

So the whole question is: What are you doing in the world? Are you a participant in it? or a watcher? If you are a participant you have become unreal and the world has become real. It is you who put your reality into the world, and then the world becomes real. It depends on you: you can take it back. Once you take it back, you become aware, the world starts becoming unreal. The reality of the world depends on how much you participate and how much you witness. Those rare moments of witnessing, and you will see Hindus are right when they say the world is maya – illusion.

Takan is right when he says it is all a dream – life and death. His last statement should be the first too – this is the whole story.

But we have put much investment in our belief-systems. You must be aware of it – if you are not involved, you become aware. Somebody has fallen in love with somebody – you laugh. All lovers look ridiculous to people who are not in love. All lovers look foolish, stupid, mad. That's why we say that somebody has fallen in love. Fallen – he is no more upright, he is no more alert to what he is doing. That's why we say lovers are blind, love is blind. It is so, for those who are not participants. But for the one who is participating in it, it is no more a dream, it is the only reality there is. All other realities have disappeared; only one reality is there.

When two lovers are moving hand in hand, the world that you see they don't see. They have their own world, a private world. That's why lovers have never been liked by other people – because lovers don't live in the common world, they live in their own private world. They have a private language. They feel enough; together they are enough. If the whole world disappears they don't care, they couldn't care less. In fact the world just seems a hindrance. Lovers want to be alone, they don't want to be interfered with. They are moving into a different reality.

When love disappears even these lovers will laugh about their own past, and they will say, 'How foolish I was!' That's what all old people say – they say how foolish they were when they were young. That does not necessarily mean that they have become wise. If they are young again, if some miracle happens and they become young again, they will again be as foolish as ever.

In fact, an old man starts going to the temple or the mosque or GURUDUWARA or the church – now he has started living in another dream, the religious dream. Now he talks with Krishna. First, he used to talk with his beloved – the beloved may be thousands of miles away, and he used to talk to her, and he was constantly filled with her image. Now he thinks of Krishna, Christ, God, and is talking, praying. This is again entering into another dream.

It is easy to drop out of one dream and enter into another. It is very difficult to drop out of all dreams – and that's what Zen is all about. It says: It has no meaning just changing one dream to another. The basic thing remains, that you go on creating new dreams. And if you dream strongly, if you dream with deep trust, with no doubt, with no suspicion arising in you, you can transform any thought into a thing.

This is one of the oldest sayings in the Bible: 'As a man thinketh, so he becomes.' Yes, you create your world, you create yourself too. Thoughts become things. Believed deeply, thoughts become things – a thing is nothing but a condensed thought. Every reality in life arises first as a thought.

Just watch: the aeroplane was once a thought in somebody's mind. Maybe the thought remained and persisted in many minds. It took thousands of years to become a reality, but that doesn't matter. Man wanted to fly. Since the very beginning, man wanted to fly – and the idea persisted and persisted and persisted. And one day the idea became a reality. The Wright brothers went into the air, the dream became reality.

All scientific discoveries are nothing but dreams persistently dreamt by humanity. If you go on, if you go on – if you go on dropping into that dream again and again and putting your energy there, investing your life into it, it is going to become a reality. It is not possible that it can escape you; the only thing needed is persistence.

And that's what modern physics says too – from a very different angle. Albert Einstein has unknowingly brought Zen to modern physics. Modern physics says matter and energy are convertible. The psychologists have always asserted that thoughts can be converted into things, and all things have once been just thoughts. A condensed thought becomes a thing; it becomes a materialization. Now modern physics says energy and matter are convertible. A thought is energy, a thing is matter. Einstein's great formula: $e = mc^2$ is of great importance. Whatever you call material is not material, it is as much a thought as any other thought.

Eddington is reported to have said: 'The more I look into reality, the more I feel that it appears more like a thought than like a thing.' And now in scientific circles there is great talk about alternate realities. Euclidean geometry creates one kind of reality. Non-euclidean geometry creates another kind of reality, just the opposite kind of reality. Now there is talk of many kinds of mathematics, and there is talk of many kinds of logic systems. And it depends. If you believe in one logic system, you will come across one kind of reality. If you don't believe in it, you will never come across it, because you will never move in that dimension.

So reality is not one, realities are many. And you don't live in a universe, you live in a multi-verse. And it happens every day – if you watch, you will find it every day.

A child lives in a different kind of world – the distinction between the dream and the real has not yet arisen. Maybe that's why we all remember our childhood with nostalgia. We all think it was beautiful, it was incredible, it was wonderful. What was the wonder of it all? The wonder was, there was no distinction between reality and a dream – you could easily slip from one dream into another dream. It was easy to get out of one dream and enter into another; there were no hindrances.

The child had no problems because he had no fixed beliefs. Liquid beliefs... and no belief was yet a settled phenomenon, no belief had yet become a concrete thing. All was liquid, flowing – and so was the child and his consciousness.

Men live in a different kind of reality than women, because they live in a different system of thoughts and a different system of beliefs. Man lives in an aggressive belief, woman lives in a receptive belief. All that they do, all that they think, all that they believe, is deep down very different.

When a man thinks about a woman he thinks about love, he never thinks about marriage. When a woman thinks about a man, she thinks about marriage. Love is secondary, security is first. She lives in a different kind of world – maybe in the future she may not, but in the past the only problem for the woman was how to be secure. She is fragile, she is soft, she is weaker, she is afraid. All around is a man-created world, and she is a stranger in it. She needs security. So when she falls in love, the first concept, the first idea, is how to be secure, safe. She would not like to make love to a man unless marriage is settled. Marriage has to be the first thing, then anything else can follow.

Man is less interested in marriage, very much less interested. In fact not interested at all. If he agrees, he agrees only reluctantly – because marriage means responsibility. Marriage means bondage, marriage means now you are imprisoned. Now you are no more free to move with other women. For a man, marriage looks like a prison. For a woman, marriage looks like safety, security, a home. For a woman marriage means home, and for a man marriage means slavery. Total different beliefs, so they act differently. Conflicting beliefs.

For a young man the world is different, for an old man it is different. For the young, death does not exist. Death has not yet shadowed his belief-system at all; he lives as if he is going to live for ever. He is ambitious, he wants to do something, he wants to show to the world: 'I am here. The world should know that I have come into the world.'

A small boy was saying to his mother, 'The world has changed a lot.' The mother was surprised by this statement, because the child was only five. What world has he seen, to say that the world has changed a lot? And she asked, 'What do you mean, the world has changed a lot? I don't see much change since you came into the world. Five years is not a long time. And how do you KNOW? You have not yet lived long enough to say such a thing.'

And the child said, 'Yes, the world has changed a lot. Now I am in it.' The world is no more the same, certainly. And everybody wants, when he is young, to show his mettle. Death does not matter yet, life is all.

When a man becomes old, life is receding. Death becomes a big shadow – it overshadows everything. Now he is no more ambitious, now he does not want to prove anything. Now he knows he is going to disappear within days or months or years – the day of departure is coming closer. Now there is not time enough to prove anything. And now he knows that whatsoever you do, nothing can be proved, nobody bothers.

He has lived his life, and now the frustration has settled. He is no more ambitious. His eyes are no more full of dreams – the eyes are full of fear, the eyes are full of death. He can hear the footsteps of death all around. Now he cannot run. No – when he goes upstairs he becomes tired, he cannot breathe rightly. He cannot enjoy the food that he always liked, he cannot love the woman. Things are disappearing... part by part, he is dying. Death is coming, and death has to be reckoned with.

Now he thinks of God. Now temples for the first time start becoming significant. He had passed those temples before, but they were not there.

What I am saying is, we are moving in different tracks. He had passed many times through the street, and the temple was there – but it was never before him. For him it was not there, it was not

part of his reality. Those temple bells he had never heard before, he was so full of other things. The sound of money was too much, he was so much concerned with ambition and ego, he was so much concerned to become powerful – the temple was not yet existential. It was a faraway distant phenomenon – maybe it was there, maybe it was not there, but it didn't matter at all.

Now suddenly money does not matter, power does not matter. He is no more moving towards power, prestige. Suddenly the temple stands there, out of all proportion. The movie-house disappears, the woman disappears, the money disappears, the friends, the club – they all disappear. Suddenly the temple is there, very real. Death has become part of his belief-system, and his-reality has changed.

Now, Zen says, this is how we go on changing from one belief-system to another. A bit changed here, a bit changed there – but the belief-system remains enclosing us. Is there a way to drop all belief-systems? Yes, there is a way to drop all belief-systems – and only when you drop all belief-systems do you know what really is real. So the so-called reality is not the reality, the so-called reality is only relatively called so. The really real cannot be known by any belief-system – your belief-system pollutes it, your belief-system enters into it, makes it different.

Come naked, come nude, to reality. Come without clothes, and without theories and without philosophies. That's why Zen is so much against scriptures, against theologies. It is against thinking. Don't come with the mind to see reality. Otherwise you will see something which is not there. You will see something – and if you want to see it you will even find it. That is the beauty – that if you believe, you will find it. You will create it. Your mind is creative: beware of the mind.

And this is not only modern physics but this is the whole philosophy behind the science of hypnosis, down the ages from Mesmer to Coue. This is the whole philosophy of hypnosis, hypnotism: Believe it, and it will be so. Coue used to teach his patients, 'Just believe that you are getting better and better every day, that you are getting healthier every day. Believe it.' And if you rightly believe, if you really believe without any doubt, it happens. The disease can disappear – you can make it disappear. If you believe rightly, the disease is bound to disappear. If you start believing in the disease then the disease is going to stay there, and will go on increasing.

That's why hypnosis is of tremendous value, because people live in their minds. Because people live in their minds, hypnosis can be of great help. It can give you better beliefs. It cannot give you reality, remember, but it can give you better beliefs. It is better to believe that you are healthy than to believe that you are ill. If you believe you are ill, you become ill.

I was a student in a university, and one of my professors was very much against hypnosis. And I have always been a lover of it – because in both the ways hypnosis is very important. First, it can help you to live in a better belief-system. Secondly, it can make you aware that it is all belief-systems – disease and health, strength and weakness, happiness and unhappiness, heaven and hell, are all belief-systems. Hypnosis will show you that too.

So hypnosis can help you to live in better dreams, one thing. And hypnosis can help you to be aware that ALL is dreaming. And then you take another step into a higher hypnosis – and the higher hypnosis becomes de-hypnosis. Higher hypnosis means dropping hypnosis. Knowing it well, that you can change your belief and you can change your reality, one day you come to realize that now you can drop all beliefs – and all relative realities disappear. Hypnosis has not taken the ultimate

step of de-hypnosis. In fact, hypnotists think that de-hypnosis is something against their science. It is not. It is the ultimate growth of it. Start through hypnosis, reach to de-hypnosis.

Zen is de-hypnosis. All other religions are hypnosis, so all other religions are only beginnings. Zen is the ultimate end. No other religion will fulfill you; it will give you a better belief-system, it will make you happier. And you can see it – in America there is everything now, and people are not happy. They have a wrong hypnosis.

In India, people don't have anything to be happy, and still they are happy. They have a better kind of hypnosis – the difference is just of hypnosis. America has everything to be happy, the missing link is just that a better hypnosis is not there – in fact, a very wrong attitude. So you have ALL. The society is affluent, rich, science has given you a thousand and one gadgets to live. But still misery. Because one thing is missing – just science won't be of much help, unless you change your belief system.

In India you can find a beggar, and as happy as an emperor. He has nothing to be happy with, but one thing he has – he has a hypnotic belief. He believes that this is how God has made it. 'This is how God wants me to be, and God takes care. This is my fate.' He has reconciled himself with it. He thinks, 'I have done bad karmas in the past, that's why I am a beggar. No more bad karmas, next life I am going to be an emperor.' Finished. Simple. The only thing is, now he is not going to do any bad karmas. And the past is past – what can you do? You cannot do anything about it, so why get miserable unnecessarily?

Misery comes in when you think you can do something about it. Then there is rejection, then there is not an acceptance of reality as it is. In India people accept – they are reconciled with fate, and they are happy. They have nothing to be happy about – just a belief, a belief-system. A far better belief-system than the American way of life.

The American way of life is rooted in a wrong hypnosis, that you cannot be happy – that is deeply rooted there. You cannot be happy if somebody else has a bigger car than you – how can you be happy? How can you be happy if somebody else has a bigger house than you? How can you be happy? – somebody else is the president, and you are not the president. How can you be happy? – somebody has married a beautiful woman, and you missed. How can you be happy? So whatsoever you have is never enough, because others are having more joy, more life – more ecstasy is there. You go on comparing.

In the East, whatsoever you have got is God's gift. This is what he wanted you to receive: receive it with gratitude. It is not competitive, it is not comparing with others. It is a simple acceptance. This belief-system gives a healthier attitude. Hypnosis can teach you how to have a better healthier attitude, how to have a more positive attitude, how to be addicted with positive beliefs – people are addicted with negative beliefs. That's what other religions do; that is half the work. Good – because it is better to have a positive belief than to have a negative belief. Rather than creating misery by having a wrong belief, it is better to create joy by having a positive belief.

But remember, Zen says, both are beliefs. Misery and happiness, both are your mind constructs. It is not real, it is not really real.

There is a third state of being where all beliefs are dropped – negative and positive, all, in toto. When all beliefs are dropped, then it is real. And that reality is neither miserable nor happy. Misery

comes out of a certain belief-system, happiness comes out of an opposite belief-system. And when you drop all belief-systems, it is a pure is-ness. There is no happiness, there is no unhappiness. There is no heaven, no hell.

Heaven is a belief, hell is a belief. And there is every possibility that people who believe that they have sinned will go to hell. There is every possibility – they are creating it. By believing it, they are creating it. Have you watched? Some day you go to sleep with fear in your mind, anguish, anxiety – and in the night you see hellish dreams. You are being tortured, you have been thrown into a concentration-camp by Adolf Hitler, and his men are torturing you, killing you. You are being thrown from a hilltop, and a rock is falling on your chest... and you can create.

Go into sleep with beautiful ideas, dreams, and you will have a sweet dream. You create your dream. Heaven and hell are created phenomena. The person who believes he is a sinner will go into hell, and the person who is believing that he is a saint and he has never done anybody any harm, will go to heaven.

But Zen says both are belief-systems. Both are your creations, both are unreal. If you have to choose between two unreals, it is better to choose the positively unreal than the negatively unreal. That is the first step of hypnosis – and hypnosis still lingers around it. Hypnosis needs a little more understanding, a little more insight. Hypnosis needs a shower of Zen.

If Zen showers on hypnosis, hypnosis will have the courage to take another step, the further step, into de-hypnosis. First, help people to change their belief-systems. That's what Santosh goes on doing here – he tries to pull you out of your negativity to positivity. And once he has pulled you out, I pull you out of your positivity too. So whatsoever Santosh does, I go on undoing – I have to do it.

Remember, it is easier to take you out of the positive than it is to take you out of the negative. That too is something to be understood. People cling to misery more. People have been trained to be miserable for so long that they cling to misery more. And there is some reason too: in misery the ego exists. So you cling more, because the misery gives you a chance to BE. When you are miserable, the ego is very very much there. When you are happy, the ego relaxes.

People are ready to come out of their happiness more easily than they are ready to come out of their misery. This is strange, but this is my observation, working with thousands of people. A happy person is easily ready to drop his belief; for an unhappy person it is very difficult to drop his belief. The unhappy person clings. He has nothing else, only the misery, but still he clings. He says, 'If I lose my misery then what is there? Even misery is gone! At least the misery is familiar. And I have lived with it so long, we have become friends.'

The happy person is ready, for many reasons. One, the happy person can believe that more happiness is possible. The unhappy person cannot believe that. The unhappy person thinks, 'If I lose this unhappiness I may fall into an even deeper unhappiness.' The unhappy person is very negative, pessimistic. He knows that life never gives any happiness. So whatsoever is, cling to it, don't lose it – otherwise you may become even more unhappy. And a new misery is far worse than an old misery. With the old misery you have become adjusted, with the new misery again you have to become adjusted.

But the happy person feels more optimistic. He has seen happiness, he can trust more. He can try – he can go on an adventure. He can move a little beyond the limit of the known, to see – 'Maybe there is more happiness also. Maybe there is a still higher state of consciousness.'

That's why I say whenever a country is in deep misery it loses contact with religion. Whenever a country is happy it keeps more contact with religion. Happy persons can become religious more easily than unhappy persons. Unhappy people become communists, fascists. Happy people can move towards higher states – they have more freedom, more buoyancy. And more trust. They can trust life – it has given them something, maybe there is more to come.

The whole science of hypnosis is this, that we create our own life according to our belief-system. Hence, if you want to know the really real, you have to drop all beliefs – positive, negative, all, in toto.

Go on watching continuously how you look at things. Each look will show you some kind of belief hidden behind it. Each look is again an expression of a belief-system. Watch. Whatsoever you say, whatsoever you see, whatsoever you interpret, go on watching silently how your belief-systems are reflected everywhere.

'The bird is on the wing,' said the poet. 'But that is absurd,' contradicted the logician. 'The wing is on the bird.'

It depends how you look at life. The poet can say, 'The bird is on the wing.' But the logician, he has a different approach. He cannot say, 'The bird is on the wing' – it is absurd. 'The wing is on the bird' – that is more logical, more factual, more close to the reality the logician lives in.

As a great Zen master, Roshi Taji, approached death, his senior disciples assembled at his bedside. One of them, remember ing the roshi was fond of a certain kind of cake, had spent half a day searching the pastry shops of Tokyo for this confection, which he now presented to Roshi Taji. With a wan smile the dying roshi accepted a piece of the cake and slowly began munching it. As the roshi grew weaker, his disciples leaned close and inquired whether he had any final words for them.

'Yes,' the roshi replied.

The disciples leaned forward eagerly. 'Please tell us!'

'My, but this cake is delicious!' And with that he died.

A Zen master does not talk about God, does not talk about death, does not talk about the beyond. He talks about the immediate. He has been munching a piece of this cake; now this is the reality. At this moment, this is what is real. The immediate is the real. The answer is very unexpected: 'My, but this cake is delicious!' – so present to the moment. You cannot imagine Ramakrishna saying that. You cannot imagine a Christian saying that, you cannot imagine a Mohammedan saying that – impossible. Only a Zen master....

At this moment, this deliciousness in his mouth is God. This is truth at this moment. This moment's truth is all there is. Even while dying, a Zen master will not bring in any belief-systems, will not bring in his mind. He will remain true to whatsoever is.

I have been reading a beautiful dream of J. B. Priestly. Meditate over it.

'I dreamt I was standing at the top of a very high tower, alone, looking down upon myriads of birds all flying in one direction; every kind of bird was there, all the birds in the world. It was a noble sight, this vast aerial river of birds.'

'But now in some mysterious fashion the gear was changed, and time speeded up, so that I saw generations of birds, watched them break their shells, flutter into life, weaken, falter and die. Wings grew only to crumble; bodies were sleek and then, in a flash, bled and shrivelled; and death struck everywhere and at every second. What was the use of all this blind struggle towards life, this eager trying of wings, all this gigantic meaningless biological effort? As I stared down, seeming to see every creature's ignoble little history almost at a glance, I felt sick at heart. It would be better if not one of them, not one of us at all, had been born, if the struggle ceased for ever.'

'I stood on my tower, still alone, desperately unhappy, but now the gear was changed again and time went faster still, and it was rushing by at such a rate that the birds could not show any movement but were like an enormous plain sown with feathers. But along this plain, flickering through bodies themselves, there now passed a sort of white flame, trembling, dancing, then hurrying on: and as soon as I saw it I knew this flame was life itself, the very quintessence of being.'

'And then it came to me, in a rocket-burst of ecstasy, that nothing mattered, nothing could ever matter, because nothing else was real but this quivering hurrying lambency of being. Birds, men or creatures not yet shaped and coloured, all were of no account except so far as this flame of life travelled through them. It left nothing to mourn over behind it; what I had thought of as tragedy was mere emptiness of a shadow show, for now all real feeling was caught and purified and danced on ecstatically with the white flame of life. I had never felt before such deep happiness as I knew at the end of my dream.'

This is what our whole life is. A dream of millions of forms, a dream of millions of names, a dream of millions of identities. We become this, we become that. We are born, we live, we love, we do a thousand and one things, and we die. And in fact, all was just forms. Empty forms, empty shadows.

The real is the flame of life, the white flame of life. To know that white flame of life one has to drop all forms from the eyes. The eyes have to become utterly empty. Hence, the Zen emphasis on being empty. If you want to know, be empty. If you want to know, be nothing. If you want to know, disappear into nothingness. Only in that nothingness will you see the flame of life. All forms disappear. The trees are no more trees and men are no more men and birds are no more birds. It is one life, one infinite life.

But to know that one infinite life, one has to drop living in forms.

Now this story.

A GREAT JAPANESE WARRIOR NAMED NOBUNAGA DECIDED TO ATTACK THE ENEMY ALTHOUGH HE HAD ONLY ONE-TENTH THE NUMBER OF MEN THE OPPOSITION COMMANDED. HE KNEW THAT HE WOULD WIN, BUT HIS SOLDIERS WERE IN DOUBT.

Of course, he was a great warrior. A great warrior lives with the belief of victory, and a great warrior cannot be defeated, because of his belief. Unless he comes against another warrior who has a stronger belief, he cannot be defeated. He is impregnable, he is invulnerable. His belief is the armour.

It happened once, a great warrior had a servant. And the servant fell in love with his wife. The warrior had gone to the war – when he came back he found out the fact. He was very angry. He was a great samurai – he gave the servant a sword and challenged him for a duel.

Now the servant was at a loss. The servant said, 'Master, why don't you kill me directly? I am a poor servant – I don't even know how to hold a sword. And fighting with you, a great warrior, a great master, who has thousands of disciples in swordsmanship.... There is nobody who can compete with you in the whole country – and you are giving me this sword to fight with you! Why don't you kill me directly? If you want to kill me, kill me – but what is the point of me fighting with you?'

But the samurai said, 'That is how it has to be. I cannot kill you, that is against my honour. You will have to fight. Accept the challenge and come into the ground.'

Now the servant – seeing no way possible, no way of getting out of it, knowing perfectly well that death has come – in a moment changed. When death is so certain he has nothing to lose. Death is absolute, so what is there to lose? He takes the sword and jumps on the master. And the master has never seen such a furious man in his life, and he has been fighting his whole life. And he starts backing away. And the servant is just mad energy. He does not know how to hold the sword, and he sees that he is not holding it rightly – but what is the point of right and wrong when you are going to die? And within seconds the master is pushed against the wall – there is no further to go back.

And the master says, 'Wait. Don't kill me right now. You can kill me after a few days, but first teach me your art. I have been fighting my whole life – I have never seen such a great warrior!'

And the servant laughed. He said, 'There is nothing, no art. But when death is certain, why not try? You are just playing. It is a question of life and death to me. To you it is just a game, you cannot put that much belief into it. That's why you have been defeated.'

And that's true, sometimes it happens. If the other has no way to get out of it, then he becomes immensely strong. Then an ordinary servant can defeat a warrior. But a warrior means one who has been trained – who has a trained hypnotic belief that he is going to win.

The moment you think that you are going to be defeated, you are going to be defeated. It has happened many times in the history of swordsmanship in Japan that two warriors were competing for years. Again and again they would challenge, and nobody was able to defeat the other because their belief-systems were equal. They both believed that they were going to win. And their belief-systems were equal, the potentiality was equal. And years passed and nobody was able to win over the other.

Victory comes through a higher, positive, stronger belief. If you are ready to accept defeat easily, you will be defeated. It has happened, down through history, many times. It always happens – a richer society is defeated by a poorer society very easily. The master being defeated by the servant.

In India it has happened, down the ages, for two thousand years. Poor societies came and conquered India very easily. India was rich. Those poor societies had nothing to lose, they had everything to gain. If they are killed and defeated there is nothing to lose, because they were going to die anyway – they were hungry, starving. But India had much to lose. When you have much to lose you become afraid. When you have much to lose you want to compromise; you are not so certain of victory.

That's why America goes on being defeated by very poor, weak cultures. It may be Vietnam, it may be Korea, it may be anywhere else – America is going to be defeated everywhere, because America has much to lose. Vietnam has nothing to lose. Vietnam is the servant – the poor, already starving. What is there to lose? The American is afraid; he has a thousand and one things to be afraid about. He is afraid of life, he's afraid of his joys, he's afraid about his wife, his children, and things like that. He's afraid – he wants to go home. He does not want to be in the war any more, somehow he wants the war to stop. He is not interested in war.

Rich societies are always defeated by poor societies. This is a miracle – but nothing is a miracle. It is simple logic: the rich cannot fight with the poor.

Karl Marx has said: 'Proletariat of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains.' And he is right – nothing to lose but your chains. You can give a good fight: if you lose anything, you lose your chains. And if you are really going to give a strong fight you may not lose anything, you may gain everything. The whole world.

'A GREAT WARRIOR' means one who has been trained from his very childhood in a certain hypnotic belief that he is going to win. That's what the training is, the discipline is. What is the discipline of a warrior? Basically, it is not the discipline of swordsmanship and archery and wrestling – those are secondary things. The basic substantial thing is the hypnotic belief that 'I am going to be the winner', that 'nobody can win over me'.

In fact there is no need to give such a big training and long training; it takes years – twenty years, fifteen years. Hypnotists can do it very easily, within months – but nobody has yet tackled it. Hypnotists can do this very easily, and many things have been done through it.

One Chinese hypnotist has tried one thing with amateur painters. He just gives them a suggestion. He hypnotizes them, brings them to deep sleep, and then suggests to them. An ordinary student of an art college is learning painting, and he suggests to him: 'You are Picasso.' And he goes on insisting this idea into his unconscious mind: 'You are Picasso.' And like a miracle, within a few days his painting is suddenly changed. His hand becomes more articulate, and something original starts happening. And he does not know anything – because whatsoever is said to him is said when he is fast asleep. He does not know that he has been given the idea that he is Picasso or a Van Gogh, but his painting starts changing. And within months, he becomes a great painter. If not Picasso, then too, a great painter.

And if he was to be trained by traditional means, what takes only months would have taken at least six years.

Now hypnosis can become a great force in the world – in the coming world it HAS to. There is no need to teach children for years ordinary things which they can be taught very easily through

hypnosis. There is no need to go on parading soldiers for years – in and out, right turn, left turn, move forward, move backward, for three hours, four hours, five hours, every day. Just foolish – a very old hypnotic method. This is hypnosis, but a bullock-cart method. You are destroying the man's old system and creating a new system, but in a very very crude way. This can be done very easily by hypnosis.

Soon you will see, the soldiers will be trained by hypnosis and not on the battle-field. And the people who will use the hypnosis first will be the people who will win.

A samurai is trained absolutely to win, he is programmed to win. So Nobunaga knows that he is going to win, there is no problem about it... BUT HIS SOLDIERS WERE IN DOUBT. Soldiers are soldiers, they are not yet warriors.

ON THE WAY HE STOPPED AT A SHINTO SHRINE AND TOLD HIS MEN: 'AFTER I VISIT THE SHRINE I WILL TOSS A COIN. IF HEADS COMES, WE WILL WIN; IF TAILS, WE WILL LOSE. DESTINY HOLDS US IN HER HAND.'

NOBUNAGA ENTERED THE SHRINE AND OFFERED SILENT PRAYER. HE CAME FORTH AND TOSSSED A COIN. HEADS APPEARED. HIS SOLDIERS WERE SO EAGER TO FIGHT THAT THEY WON THEIR BATTLE EASILY.

'NO ONE CAN CHANGE THE HAND OF DESTINY,' HIS ATTENDANT TOLD HIM AFTER THE BATTLE.

'INDEED NOT,' SAID NOBUNAGA, SHOWING A COIN WHICH HAD BEEN DOUBLED, WITH HEADS FACING EITHER WAY.

A pure experiment in hypnosis, but he hypnotized the whole army. And didn't use any ordinary traditional methods to hypnotize them – didn't say to them to concentrate on a dark point on the wall, didn't say to repeat a mantra, didn't say 'close your eyes', didn't say anything. A pure method he used, a very subtle method. He went into the shrine, prayed silently.

The soldiers would have been standing outside the shrine waiting for the result – must have been very afraid. The enemy is ten times stronger, defeat is certain. Those soldiers must have been afraid for their life – they are going to be killed, butchered. They will not come back. The enemy is ten times stronger, and everybody knows it. And this Nobunaga is mad. This is no way to fight, this is simply going into death. This is not even called for – 'We can wait, we can prepare.' This Nobunaga IS mad – but they have to follow their general.

They must have been waiting with palpitating hearts, with trembling, with great anguish. And Nobunaga comes and tosses the coin, and heads comes. Now he has changed, in a single moment, the whole gear. Now they know they are going to win.

And in an Eastern country, and hundreds of years before, where it was an absolute belief that whatsoever is going to happen, IS going to happen, destiny is all. Now there is no problem of being defeated at all, now the whole climate has changed. They are going to win.

Destiny is with them, the gods are with them – of course, they became eager to fight. Just a moment before, they were eager to run away, they were eager to hide somewhere. And defeat was certain – just a moment before, defeat was certain. And just a moment afterwards, victory is certain. They rushed into battle. They must have been very very powerful that day – who can win over such an army, who believe that 'destiny is with us'.

That's what Adolf Hitler was trying to do. And he did it, he almost did it. He was trying to hypnotize the whole German race: 'You are Nordics. You are the purest Aryan race in the world. You are MEANT to rule, God has made you for this. You are the chosen few.' A small race, but he had almost taken over the world – almost. The whole world had to unite against him to defeat one man, a small country. He forced the whole world to its knees. What was the secret? The secret was hypnosis. He created this hypnotic climate, he created this belief: 'You are going to be the winners. Destiny is with you, God has already decided. If you don't win you are simply foolish – God has decided for you. The Nordic, the Aryan, is the chosen race. God is waiting for you!'

In fact, this was an old Jewish trick that he had taken from the Jews. The Jews have been thinking, down the ages, that they are the chosen people of God. In fact, that hypnotic belief has saved them. So many tragedies they have faced, so many times they have been massacred – no other race has been so many times massacred, so much tortured. But still they survive. And not only survive, they survive with tremendous energy.

The reason? A hypnotic belief Moses created in them. Moses was a warrior – a great warrior. And what he created still persists: 'You are the chosen few, you are the chosen race of God. All others are just servants; you are the masters. You HAVE to be the masters.' This is an old Jewish trick. Maybe that's why Adolf Hitler was so angry against the Jews – because there were only two chosen races, the Jews and the Aryan. And of course the Jews had to be destroyed, to prove that God had changed his mind.

The Jews had to be utterly destroyed. And why? There is a psychological reason, if you go into it. Each time a Jew was killed, a Nordic was born. Each time Jews were destroyed and massacred, the faith of the German race became higher and higher. Because the Jews have been, down the ages, the chosen race, and suddenly they are disappearing from the earth. It proves the hypothesis of Adolf Hitler. God is not protecting them, God is protecting us, the Aryans. God is against them, they are disappearing.

Whole towns of Jews disappeared within seconds. Thousands of Jews were burnt in concentration camps within seconds – in electric ovens, just within a second, they all disappeared. Now it was a certain thing: 'God is with us. Either he has never been with these Jews and these Jews were just deceiving themselves, or he has changed his mind. Or he has got fed-up with these Jews – they have not done anything. Mm? Down the ages, they have been here and they have not done anything, so God has changed his policy. Now he looks to us.'

Adolf Hitler created such a hypnotic climate. And in that hypnotic climate the race became powerful. And the race had just been defeated in the First World War – just ten years ago the race had been defeated. Within ten years the hypnotic methodology of Adolf Hitler worked.

Nobunaga tricked his army. The coin had been doubled, with heads facing either way. But once you

believe, you create the reality. This is the whole structure of hypnosis, and this is the whole structure of your world – the world in which you live.

Zen wants you to go beyond it. Zen wants you to see that your defeat is a belief, your victory is a belief, your strength is a belief, your weakness is a belief, your being a sinner is a belief, your being a saint is a belief. All are beliefs, mind-concepts, mind-games. Your God is a meta-game.

Drop all beliefs. Then the relative disappears and the real arises.

A small story, a Tibetan story.

Once long ago a pilgrim found himself in the desert beyond Tibet. It was a starless night, the sky like black lacquer, the dusty wind importunately pulling at his hair and beard, and the jagged rocks rising to wound his stumbling feet. The pilgrim had hoped to reach a great spiritual teacher beyond the wilderness, but now that hope was gone. He might well die of thirst before morning. Fervently, the pilgrim prayed to Amida Buddha – the Lord of Light – for help.

Immediately, his foot struck something that was not a stone. It was a silver bowl filled to the brim with pure cold melting snow. The pilgrim drank all he could, in his weakened condition, and then, with a cracked prayer of gratitude, sank down upon the sand. He fell asleep.

When dawn awakened him, the pilgrim reached once again for the saving silver bowl. It proved to be a human skull. Bits of flesh, fringing the bare bone still, showed that the skull must have been full of life until quite recently. Besides, the hollow of it held what seemed to be brain-fluid, swimming thick with maggots like dirty grey thoughts. The pilgrim vomited at the sight. As he did so, SATORI came to him. He turned homeward, without delay. That which he sought was accomplished. He had found his teacher, and his temple as well – the temple of the skull.

This story is of tremendous importance. What happened? How did the SATORI happen? In the night he believed in his thirst that Buddha has given him this silver bowl. It was a dark night, starless – it was just his belief; created by his thirst. He was dying, he was on the verge of death – his mind must have dreamed, must have projected. In a human skull he saw a silver bowl – he projected. And he thought the brain-fluid was just pure ice-water – he drank it. And it was so – when he thought it was pure ice-water, it was pure ice-water; and when he thought it was a silver bowl, it was a silver bowl.

You live in your projections.

Happy, he thanked Buddha and fell asleep. In the morning when the sun was rising, he opened his eyes. He wanted to see the silver bowl that had saved his life... and it was a human skull. BITS OF FLESH FRINGING THE BARE BONE STILL, SHOWED THAT THE SKULL MUST HAVE BEEN FULL OF LIFE UNTIL QUITE RECENTLY. Disgusting. BESIDES, THE HOLLOW OF IT HELD WHAT SEEMED TO BE BRAIN-FLUID... nauseating... SWIMMING THICK WITH MAGGOTS LIKE DIRTY GREY THOUGHTS.

You can think of that man, that poor man. He vomited. Now it was no more a silver bowl, and it was no more pure ice-water. He vomited. And in that vomiting, something dawned in his consciousness. He could see that it is all a mind game: if you see it as a silver bowl, it becomes a silver bowl.

In the night, there was no nausea. He had drunk the brain-fluid with maggots in it, but there was no nausea and no question of vomiting. And he had thanked God, thanked Buddha, in great gratitude. And he had fallen asleep, and he slept the whole night beautifully, and there was nothing wrong. And now, seeing it, the vomiting comes – after hours.

A great understanding happened – that it is all the mind. If it is all the mind, then there is no need to go anywhere: you can drop the mind at your own home. That was the satori, just seeing the point of it – it is just an idea. If he had got up early in the morning and had left, then there would never have been any vomiting. It is just an idea. And who knows? – in the night, maybe Amida Buddha had managed to produce a silver bowl. Mm? these Buddhas are strange people, they can do things like that. In the night he may have drunk out of a silver bowl – who knows? – and there was nothing to vomit over. Or maybe in the morning Amida Buddha had managed to produce this skull filled with brain-fluid, streaming with maggots, dirty maggots. Who knows?

But that is not the point. One thing is certain – that when you believe one thing you live in one reality, when you believe another thing you live in another reality. It is only a question of belief. All your worlds are belief-worlds.

Hence the satori. He must have laughed: that vomit was a great experience. He must have laughed, he must have understood the very root of it all. And then there was no need to seek the teacher, the teacher has been found. And there was no need to go to the temple where he was going, the temple has been found... in the human skull.

He must have come back dancing, he must have come back celebrating, he must have come back a totally different man. A man who is no more asleep in thoughts, in the mind – a man who lives no more in projections, a man who dreams no more. A man who now sees – whose clarity has become absolute, whose consciousness now has a transparency.

This is what satori is.

CHAPTER 6

The Door to the Wild

26 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

Question 1

I AM FIFTY, BUT I DON'T YET FEEL REALLY MATURE AND FULLY GROWN UP. WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH ME?

Maybe you have not yet killed anybody. That's a must. If you want to become mature, you have to become a very very skillful murderer. Unless you kill a few persons you will never become mature. You have to kill your parents, you have to kill your teachers, you have to kill your leaders. They are all clamouring inside you, and they don't allow you to become a grown-up person – they go on keeping you childish. they make you a dependant, they don't allow you independence.

It happened, a monk was taking leave from Buddha – he was going far away to spread Buddha's message. And when he came to touch his feet, Buddha blessed him and said to his other disciples, 'Do you see this blessed monk? He has killed his mother, he has killed his father, he has killed his relatives, he has killed his king.' The people were very much surprised, they could not believe their ears – 'What is Buddha saying?'

One disciple gathered courage and asked, 'Sir, what do you mean? Do you mean a murderer has some virtue? You are calling him blessed?' Buddha laughed and he said, 'Not only that, he has even murdered himself – he has committed suicide.' Then Buddha sings a song, says a GATHA, in which he explains what he means by it.

Everybody is brought up as a child. That is your first way into the world; that's how you have been trained for years, to remain a child. Everything was ordered, and you were expected to obey. You

have become very dependant – you always go on looking for father-figures, you always go on looking for authorities to say to you what should be done, what should not be done.

Maturity means the understanding to decide for oneself, the understanding to be decisive on your own. To stand on your own feet – that's what maturity is. But it rarely happens, because parents spoil almost every child, more or less. And then there is the school and the college and the university – they are all ready to spoil you. It is very rare that somebody becomes mature.

The society is not happy with mature people. Mature people are dangerous people, because a mature person lives according to his own being. He goes on doing his own thing – he does not bother what people say, what their opinion is. He does not hanker for respectability, for prestige; he does not bother for honour. He lives his own life – he lives it at any cost. He is ready to sacrifice everything, but he is never ready to sacrifice his freedom.

Society is afraid of these people; society wants everybody to remain childish. Everybody should be kept at an age somewhere between seven and fourteen – that's where people are.

In the First World War, for the first time, psychologists became aware of this strange phenomenon. For the first time on a large scale, in the army, people's mental ages were searched for. And it was a strange discovery: the army people had the average mental age of twelve. Your body may be fifty, your mind remains somewhere below fourteen.

Before fourteen you are repressed – because after fourteen repression becomes difficult. By the time a child is fourteen, if he has not been repressed then there is no possibility to repress him ever – because once he becomes a sexual being, he becomes powerful. Before fourteen he is weak, soft, feminine. Before fourteen you can put anything into his mind – he is suggestible, you can hypnotize him. You can tell him everything that you want, and he will listen to it, he will believe in it.

After fourteen, logic arises, doubt arises. After fourteen, sexuality arises; with sexuality he becomes independent. Now he himself is able to become a father, now she herself is able to become a mother. So nature, biology, makes a person independent from parents at the age fourteen.

This has been found long before psychologists entered into the world. Priests have found it long before – for thousands of years they have watched, and they have come to know: if you want to repress a child, if you want to make a child a dependent, do it as early as possible – the earlier, the better. If it can be done before seven, success is far more certain. If it cannot be done before fourteen, then there is no possibility to do it.

That's why all kinds of people are interested in children and their education. All religions are interested, they say children should receive religious education. Why? Before they become independent, their minds should be conditioned.

So the greatest work for a man who really wants to become free, who really wants to become conscious, who really wants to become de-hypnotized – who wants to have no limitations of any kind, who wants to flow in a total existence – is that he needs to drop many things from the inside. And when I say, when Buddha says, you have to kill your mother and father, that doesn't mean that you have to go and actually kill your father and mother – but the father and mother that you are carrying within you, the idea.

Watch, observe, and you will find it. You are going to do something, and suddenly you will hear your mother's voice: 'Don't do it!' You can watch, and you will hear the voice, actual voice – it is a tape inside you. You are going to eat too much ice-cream: watch. Suddenly a moment comes when the mother speaks from within: 'Don't eat too much – enough is enough. Stop!' And at that time you start feeling guilty.

If you are going to make love to a woman or to a man, suddenly all the teachers are standing there in a queue and saying: 'You are going to commit a crime, you are going to commit sin. Beware! This is the trap. Escape before it is too late.' Even while you are making love to your wife, your mother, your father, your teachers, are there in-between, destroying it.

It is very rare to find a man or a woman who really goes totally into love – you cannot go. Because for many years you have been taught love is something wrong – how can you drop it suddenly?

Unless you are very capable of murdering all these voices... great courage is needed. And that's what I mean by sannyas. My own definition of sannyas is: a person who is ready to drop all parental voices, who is ready to drop all authorities, who is ready to go into the unknown without any map, on his own. Who is ready to risk.

It happened, Alexander Eliot was studying under a Zen master. For months he was doing meditations, zazen, and he was entering into deeper waters of his own being. One night he had a dream, a very strange dream. But Zen people know about this dream. For Eliot it was strange – he was a Westerner, he was shocked. He relates his dream...

'I recently had a dream in which Bodhidharma appeared. He was a floating huddle of a man – round, ghostly, with bulging eyes and bulbous brow.'

Just like me... Bodhidharma is a dangerous man. And Zen people have painted his face, very lovingly, in a very dangerous way. He was not like that – not actually, not physically. Physically he was one of the most beautiful men ever – but if you come across a picture of a Bodhidharma you will start getting scared. If you look into the eyes of Bodhidharma he looks like a murderer, he is going to kill you. But that's all that a master does.

Even in the dream, Alexander Eliot became very much scared and started trembling.

'Was he grinning, or grimacing? His coarse bristling whiskers made this impossible to tell. "You seem to be a grown-up man," he whispered through the beard, "yet you have never killed anyone. How come?"'

In a dream, Bodhidharma asks, 'You have not killed anyone, and you seem to be a grown-up man. How come?' He was so much shocked that he awoke, and he found himself perspiring and trembling. 'What does this strange man mean? – "How come you have not yet killed anybody?"'

That's what I mean when I say if you are feeling you are not yet a grown-up man, that simply shows you have not killed anybody yet. Fifty years is already too late – now don't waste time any more. Kill immediately all the impressions inside you. Wash your inside of all old tapes, unwind your mind. And start living your life, from this moment, as if you don't know, as if nobody has taught you anything – fresh, clean, from abe.

And you will see maturity coming very soon – and without maturity life is not worth anything. Because all that is beautiful happens only in a mature mind, all that is great happens only in a mature mind. To be a grown-up is a blessing. But people simply grow up – they never become grown-ups. In age they go on growing, but in consciousness they go on shrinking. Their consciousness remains in the foetus; it has not come out of the egg, it is not yet born. Only your body is born – you are yet unborn.

Take your life into your own hands: it is YOUR life. You are not here to fulfill anybody else's expectations. Don't live your mother's life and don't live your father's life, live your life. And when you start living your life, you are living God's life.

Question 2

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE SUPPRESS THE SUBLIME? WHAT IS SO THREATENING ABOUT PARADISE?

There is. There is much that is threatening about paradise.

People are very much afraid of happiness. You will be surprised, because ordinarily you always say, 'I am hankering for happiness. I want all that is possible in life.' But my own observation is... and it is not mine alone, it is the observation of all the observers, of all the ages. I have been working with thousands of people, but this observation becomes stronger every day – that people cling to misery, they don't want to be happy.

In fact nobody is hindering them from being happy – they can be happy right now, nothing is missing. But they cling to the misery. They talk about happiness – because they are miserable, so naturally they talk about happiness. The more miserable they are, the more they talk about happiness, the more they seek and search and the more they create much noise – 'I want happiness. I want happiness.' But they don't drop the misery that they are carrying – and unless they drop it, they cannot become happy.

You cannot become happy with a miserable mind. Happiness is not somewhere waiting for you. Happiness is just absence of misery, that's all – once you stop creating misery, you are happy. Happiness is man's nature. You need not worry about happiness at all, it is already there. It is in your heart – you just have to stop being unhappy, you have to stop the mechanism functioning which creates unhappiness.

But nobody seems to be ready for that. People say, 'I want happiness.' It is as if you go on saying, 'I want health' – and you go on clinging to your disease, and you don't allow the disease to go. If the doctor prescribes the medicine, you throw away the medicine; you never follow any prescription. You never go for a morning walk, you never go swimming, you never go running on the beach, you never do any exercise. You go on eating obsessively, you go on destroying your health – and again and again you go on asking where to find health. But you don't change the mechanism that creates unhealth.

Health is not something to be attained somewhere, it is not an object. Health is a totally different way of living. The way you are living creates disease, the way you are living creates misery.

For example, people come to me and they say they would like to be happy, but they cannot drop their jealousy. If you can't drop your jealousy, love will never grow – the weeds of jealousy will destroy the rose of love. And when love does not grow, you will not be happy. Because who can be happy without love growing? Unless that rose blooms in you, unless that fragrance is released, you cannot be happy.

Now people want happiness – but just by wanting, you can-not get it. Wanting is not enough. You will have to see into the phenomenon of your misery, how you create it – how in the first place you became miserable, how you go on becoming miserable every day – what is your technique? Because happiness is a natural phenomenon – if somebody is happy there is no skill in it, if somebody is happy it needs no expertise to be happy.

Animals are happy, trees are happy, birds are happy. The whole existence is happy, except man. Only man is so clever as to create unhappiness – nobody else seems to be so skillful. So when you are happy it is simple, it is innocent, it is nothing to brag about. But when you are unhappy you are doing great things to yourself; you are doing something REALLY hard.

Listen to my statement: To be miserable needs great expertise, to be miserable needs great cleverness and cunningness. To be miserable needs hard arduous work – TAPASCHARYA. To be miserable is very difficult – how people manage is almost a miracle.

To be happy is very simple. Look into the eyes of a cow. Look, the dog goes on resting. Look at a cat, the way she purrs. Everything seems to be happy and there is no problem about it! Except man.

So the first thing to be understood: people are afraid of happiness. Why? There is a subtle thing to be remembered: in misery you ARE – that's why you cling to misery. In happiness you disappear – that's why you are afraid of happiness. In happiness the ego cannot exist. The ego is unnatural, the ego is artificial, the ego is not really there, it is only a belief. When you are miserable, all the misery and all the artificiality of the misery becomes a prop to the ego. The ego can exist with the misery – things go perfectly okay, they are in tune. If misery disappears all props disappear, and the palace of ego starts falling down.

In happiness, nobody has an ego. Have you not watched it? Because I think, sometimes... those moments are rare, but they are still there – sometimes when you are happy have you not watched? how utterly you are not there when you are happy. Listening to music sometimes, a window opens and you are happy. In that moment you are not – music is, you are not. Dancing, a moment comes like a breeze, and you are soaked with something unknown... a benediction showers on you. Dance is, the dancer is no more.

Sometimes in the mountains, or sometimes on the beach just taking a sunbath, you disappear. Those moments of your absence are the moments of happiness, bliss, of ecstasy. It is not that you are there, and you are happy, no. Nobody can be both happy and be. Happiness is, then you are not – you never meet happiness. You can be very very well with unhappiness, misery. Misery and you can exist together – in fact you cannot exist separately. Hence people go on clinging with misery. People really hanker for hell.

George Bernard Shaw is reported to have said, 'If I am going to be second in the queue into heaven then I don't want to go to heaven. If I can be the first man in hell then I will choose hell – but I would like to be the first man.' Hell is okay, acceptable; but to be second to anybody is not acceptable. And it is not only George Bernard Shaw that is saying it – this is the desire of all human beings.

You are ready to go into hell, hell is okay – if you can exist as an ego. In heaven you cannot exist as an ego.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE SUPPRESS THE SUBLIME? Because with the sublime you disappear. And one thing more: people not only repress the sublime, they repress the natural too. Now, this has to be understood in a certain way....

Man has three layers of consciousness. The ordinary consciousness is called the conscious mind. Below it is the unconscious mind, above it is the superconscious mind. Between the two, the superconscious and the unconscious, is sandwiched the small conscious. It is a very small fragment. The unconscious is vast, oceanic; so is the superconscious vast, oceanic. Between these two the conscious is just a small thing, like an island – the ego island.

If you go into the unconscious it disappears – the island disappears, as if the island was not really an island but just a big ice-rock. If you move into the unconscious it disappears. Hence, people are afraid of the natural too. They are afraid of God as much as they are afraid of sex, they are afraid of prayer as much as they are afraid of love. They are afraid, but the reason is the same – they are afraid if they fall below the conscious, if they allow the unconscious to function, then they are no more there. Then their ego island melts and disappears.

While making love, you are not – unless you are a moralist and a puritan. While making love you disappear, you melt. There is great vibration but you are not, there is great pulsation but you are not. There is orgasm... but you are not. A dance of energies, a great rhythm, a harmony – something unheard is heard, something unknown is tasted... but you are not. Hence the fear of the unconscious.

And the same happens when you move beyond the conscious and you go towards the sublime – towards God, prayer, meditation. Again the same fear, you will melt.

With the unconscious sometimes you have a date. Because with the unconscious there is one beautiful thing – you disappear, but you can come back. In one thing the unconscious and the superconscious are the same – that you disappear in both. In one thing they are different – with the unconscious you disappear only for a moment, then again you are back, back home. Again the island is safe and you are the same as of old. It is only momentary, this pilgrimage takes only a few moments.

So people sometimes have a date with the unconscious, but with the superconscious they go on avoiding it. Because once you go into it you are gone for ever. GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASANGATE BODHI SVAHA – gone, gone, gone forever; gone forever, never to come back. Hence the fear, the tremendous fear. But this fear has to be dropped, otherwise you live in hell – and you live there out of your own choice. You live in misery, and this is your decision.

My whole effort here is to make you alert to see how misery exists. It exists with your support, with your co-operation; it cannot exist alone. You exist with its support, it exists with your support – it is a conspiracy between the ego and the misery. Have you not watched it? People talk more about their misery than they talk about their happiness. In fact they don't talk about their happiness. People go on talking and boring each other about their misery, their diseases, this and that.

I have heard about a woman who went to a doctor, and the doctor said, 'What is wrong with you?' She said, 'Don't bother about what is wrong – just do some operation.'

The doctor said, 'But what do you mean? For what? Have you gone mad?' She said, 'Anything will do – remove my tonsils, or remove my appendix, anything will do. But I am tired of listening to other people's stories about their operations. Whenever I meet a woman, she goes on talking about how her tonsils have been removed, and I have to listen to the whole story. Somebody's appendix has been removed... and the whole story. And I have nothing to talk about. Remove anything whatsoever, let me also have something to talk about.'

People talk about their miseries and feel very good. Because the more they have miseries, the more they are: They exaggerate their miseries. You can see it in yourself – when you talk about your misery you exaggerate it, you make it look bigger, you magnify it.

I had one woman colleague when I was a professor in a university. And she used to bore me about her illnesses and operations and.... One day I phoned her husband – her husband was a very famous advocate – and I told him, 'Your wife has tortured me like anything. Wherever she finds me she immediately starts – and just out of politeness I have to listen to all this nonsense.'

The husband laughed. He said, 'That's why I am feeling a little bit relieved – so she is doing it to you! But don't believe her! If she says 'cancer' just think that she must be having a headache or something, not... don't believe her! I myself used to believe her, in the beginning.'

She exaggerates so much. But why do people exaggerate their misery? The bigger the misery, the bigger they are. So many troubles they are facing, so many challenges – they are fighting a great war. They exaggerate the enemy because only by the exaggeration of the enemy do they become greater. And then they conquer the enemy.

If it is just an ordinary headache and you conquer it, what is the point? If it is cancer and you conquer it, then you have done SOMETHING something like a miracle.

Watch, and stop these mechanisms functioning. Never talk about your misery – it is not worth talking about, it is only worth dropping. Never pay too much attention to your misery, because if you pay attention you are feeding it. Attention is food – if you give attention to anything it becomes stronger.

Never feed your misery by paying it attention. Just remain aloof, unconcerned. Even if it is there it's okay, remain unconcerned. And by and by, you will be surprised – the big misery starts becoming smaller, smaller, smaller... one day suddenly it has disappeared. You were helping it to be there by giving it attention.

Remember, attention is really food, nourishment. Now there are scientific experimentations proving the fact that attention is food. You pay attention to anything, and it grows. Now they say even trees

grow faster if the gardener pays attention. If the gardener pays special attention to one tree, other trees will not grow as fast as that one tree will grow.

You can experiment yourself – it is not a big problem, you need not have a big lab for it. You just choose ten plants of the same size and pay attention to one. Give water to everybody, give manure to everybody – but pay attention to one. Sometimes caress that plant, hug it, kiss it, pay attention to it. Sit by its side, talk to it, sing a song to it. And you will be surprised – scientists have been surprised – that plant grows faster. Within months it will be double the size of all other plants. They have been neglected – not that you have been neglecting by not watering them; everything was the same. Just one thing was missing: attention was not paid.

That's why children grow faster when they are with their mother. You can give them to a nurse who will take every care – maybe far better than the mother herself, because she is a trained one, she knows how to take care. But something is missing: the nurse cannot give the attention that the mother can give. The mother may not be a trained one, but that is not the point – the child knows that the mother goes on paying attention, the child feels important. He knows the mother is around, he can trust. The hug of the mother, the warmth of the mother, and the very attention, makes him feel worthy.

He is needed. Somebody needs him, somebody's happiness needs him. If he is not there the mother becomes unhappy, if he is ill the mother is unhappy. So he is not useless in this world, somebody depends on him. Somebody has investments in him – there is somebody who will be unhappy if he is not there, he is making somebody happy. When you feel needed, you feel good. There is a need to be needed – the attention gives him certainty that he is needed. Without him the mother won't be the same woman. She won't smile, and she won't run like this, as she runs around him; she will be sad and miserable. So he is significant; he has brought meaning into the world.

When you love a woman she becomes more beautiful. When a woman loves you you become more graceful, suddenly all your awkwardness is gone. You become more clean – you take a bath every day, you brush your teeth more carefully, now you are worried if you perspire too much.

You change overnight if a woman falls in love with you. What happens? She pays attention to you, you become important. Now those two eyes are waiting for you – you have to satisfy those two eyes, their happiness depends on you. You are not just irrelevant in this world, you are needed. You are a must here – without you the world won't be the same. Suddenly, a significance, a glory, arises around you; you are surrounded by an aura. You can see in a man whether he is in love or not. Just by watching him you can see whether he's in love or not. When a man is not in love he becomes lethargic. His feet lose dance, he becomes dull, there is no joy, he is not bubbling. He no more has any wings, his wings are clipped.

But when a man is in love, suddenly he has wings. Again dreams, again poetry, arise. There is not a single man or woman on the earth who has not become poetic when she or he was in love. In fact the people who are called poets are people who are in love continuously. Their object of love may be anything – maybe nature, maybe God, maybe a woman, maybe just humanity – but the people who are known as poets are the people who are continuously in love. Hence, they remain poetic. Otherwise everybody is poetic – you just lose track of love, and the poetry is lost.

Attention is food, very subtle food. Remember it: Don't pay attention to the negative, don't pay attention to your misery.

Don't talk about it, don't magnify it – you are destroying yourself, it is self-destructive. Neglect it, and neglected it dies. Be indifferent to it. Indifference is poison – if you want to destroy it, train yourself into more indifference towards it.

Be more concerned with happiness, pay more attention to happiness. Small happinesses should be given all attention – small moments, but you should focus your whole energy into them, you should pour yourself utterly into them. And they will grow, and they will spread all over your life.

Paradise is not something geographical, it is not somewhere THERE – paradise is a way of life, just as hell is a way of life. Hell is here, and paradise is here. And sometimes it is possible that you may be in hell and the person sitting by your side may be in heaven. So heaven and hell are not so apart. They are psychological states, ways of life, and it is up to you.

Question 3

I WANT TO BECOME A SANNYASIN BUT I HAVE BEEN TAUGHT FROM MY VERY CHILDHOOD TO TAKE EVERY STEP VERY CAREFULLY. AND BECAUSE OF THAT, I HAVE BEEN HESITATING LONG. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you go on hesitating, you will miss all that is beautiful. Because the beautiful comes only in rare moments – if you are not ready enough to jump into it when the moment is there, you will go on missing. A man who continuously hesitates goes on missing – because when the moment comes, he is hesitating. When the moment has gone he may even decide, but now the opportunity is no more there. So he has to wait for the opportunity.

It is said about Immanuel Kant, a woman told him that she would like to marry him. It was so good of that woman – because people rarely fall in love with people like Immanuel Kant. Just hung-up in their heads... who wants to fall in love with such people? The woman must have been a woman of great compassion.

Immanuel Kant said, 'Let me think about it.' He thought for three years – he meditated over it, for all pros and for all cons. His diary is still preserved; he has written three hundred reasons for and against. There is only one reason more for 'for' – finally, because of that one reason, he decided. Now, this kind of decision is not much of a love. Mm? this is too much of logic – syllogistic.

He went to the woman's house, knocked on the door. The father opened the door and he said, 'What do you want, young man?' And he said, 'I have decided to marry your daughter.'

The father laughed. He said, 'You came a little late – she is already married, and she has a child! You have missed the opportunity.' And Immanuel Kant remained a bachelor for his whole life – because no other woman ever asked him, and of course he could not ask any other woman himself; that is impossible for such people. He would hesitate to ask, he would hesitate for years to

A newly-married society girl was determined to prove to her husband what an accomplished cook she was, and on the servant's day off, set about cooking a chicken for his dinner. She plucked the fowl carefully, arranged it neatly in a pot, and put it in the oven.

Two hours later, she heard a loud banging on the oven door. Investigation proved that the disturbance was being made by the chicken.

'Lady,' it cried piteously, 'either give me back my feathers or turn on the gas! I am freezing to death in this oven.'

You have waited long enough. Either do something or die! Have a little mercy upon yourself. And why be so afraid, and why be so careful? Life belongs to those who are courageous. And I am not saying don't be careful – but to me, carefulness has a totally different meaning than it has to you.

Carefulness, to me, means alertness, awareness. Carefulness does not mean cunningness, cleverness; it does not mean calculation. Carefulness means: be alert, behave in an alert way. Don't move sleepily in life, move with open eyes. I am not saying, 'Be blind, and do anything.' Keep your eyes open. But just by keeping your eyes open and sitting silently and never taking a risk, you are not going to go anywhere. You will simply die there.

You are not living, you are vegetating. Move! Life is movement, life is a river. If the river hesitates it will become a pond. And a pond is a dead thing, and a pond naturally becomes dirty. And sooner or later the pond will become dry, the water will evaporate.

The river flows and reaches to the ocean, enters the infinite. And the river has no map and no guides, and does not know really where it is going to land. The ocean is far away – not even the noise of the ocean can be heard. But the river goes, slowly moves, moves into the unknown, goes on groping into the unknown... and one day reaches to the ocean. All rivers reach.

If you want to reach, be riverlike. One has to be aware, that's right – but too much carefulness can be a hindrance. It will not allow you to have the unknown in your life. The known is never enough – only the unknown satisfies. Only when you move into the unknown are you fresh and young.

Now, you have lived a life of a non-sannyasin long enough. If you are happy, if you are blissful, perfectly okay – then don't bother about sannyas. Then there is no point in being a sannyasin; I will be the last person to initiate you. If you are happy the way you are, then there is no need.

But if you are unhappy and miserable the way you are, then be a little courageous. Take a few steps beyond the boundary in which you have lived up to now. And I am not saying that sannyas will make you blissful – things are not so easy. But one thing I can promise: you will be greater, more expanded. Your boundaries will not be so small, you will not be closed in a prison. And when you are bigger, there are bigger possibilities – more opportunities to be happy. Just by becoming a sannyasin nothing happens, but this courage to enter into a new adventure will make you more alive. And happiness happens to people who are more alive.

Sometimes, too much calculation, too much of a business-like mind, creates unnecessary troubles which are unasked-for.

Newly-weds went to Washington D.C. for their honeymoon and decided to check into the Watergate Hotel. The bride got into bed and said, 'Honey, I feel so uncomfortable, maybe this room is bugged.'

So the groom began looking behind pictures, into lamps, between furniture. Then he lifted up the rug and found a metal disc on the floor. He removed the screws and pulled up the disc. The relaxed newly-weds now consummated their marriage vows in great style.

Next morning in the lobby the desk clerk asked them, 'Did you spend a pleasant night?'

'Oh, yes,' replied the groom.

'I'm glad,' said the clerk. 'The couple in the room right under yours had a chandelier fall down on top of them!'

So your calculation can harm you and can harm others too. It is harmful. Be a little more courageous – a little dare-devilishness is a good quality.

And this last story for you...

A beautiful girl applied to the circus for a job as a lion-tamer. 'I already have a lion-tamer,' said the owner. 'But I can take you on as an equestrian or as a trapeze artist.'

'No,' she protested, 'I want to work as a lion-tamer.'

Just then the lion-tamer walked in on them with blood oozing from his arm. 'A lion mauled me,' he moaned. 'I won't go on tonight.'

'Okay,' said the owner to the girl, 'the job is yours.'

The girl entered the lions' cage, took off her shoes and her stockings, then her dress, her bra and her petticoat. She folded her apparel neatly. Then, naked, she lay down on the floor of the cage, using her clothes as a pillow.

Two lions walked over to her and started licking her face, her neck, her breasts.

The owner turned to his lion tamer still nursing his wounded arm and asked, 'Why can't you do that?'

'I can,' the man answered, 'if you'll just remove the lions.'

Why are you waiting? Are you waiting for the lions to be removed? then you will take sannyas? Then it will be pointless. Yes, it is risky, to become a sannyasin is a risk. It is not a bargain, it is a gamble – one never knows what will happen. And I can't guarantee you anything, and I cannot give you any promise in writing. Sannyas is not a promissory note.

I simply open the door to the wild, to the oceanic, to the orgasmic. I simply open the door. While the door is available, enter, don't hesitate too much. Hesitation is an old habit. Because of your hesitation, I can say you must have missed many more opportunities also in life – because the opportunity comes, and it is gone. It does not wait, it does not bother about you. It comes, and in a moment it is gone. If you are not ready to take it while it is there.... And it is there only for a moment – the window opens for a moment, and then it is closed and may remain closed for ever... one never knows.

So when the window is open, take a jump – go into the unknown. You will not lose anything, because you don't have anything. Why are you worried about losing something? Why are you hesitating? What have you got to lose?

It is like a naked man who will not take a bath in the river because he is afraid – where is he going to dry his clothes? And he has no clothes, he is a naked man, but he will not take the bath because then it will create unnecessary complexities – where is he going to dry his clothes?

Just look: what have you got to be afraid for? What have you got to lose? Just your miseries!

Question 4

PLEASE EXPLAIN. IS LIFE AN OBSERVER AND DEATH OBSERVED?

No, both are the observed – life and death. Beyond both is the observer. You cannot call that observer 'life' because life contains death in it. You cannot call that observer 'death' because death presupposes life. That observer is just transcendence.

That which you are is neither life nor death. You pass through life, you pass through death, but you are neither. You are just a witness to it all. You pass through happiness, you pass through misery, you pass through disease, you pass through health, you pass through success, you pass through failure – but you are none of these. You remain the watcher, you remain the witness.

That witnessing is beyond all dualities. So don't try to make it identified with one part of the polarity. Life is one part of the same circle in which the other half, death, exists. Death and life are not apart, they are together. Death and life are two aspects of the same energy, two faces of the same coin – on one side life, on the other side death. Can you think of life without death? Or can you think of death without life? So they are not really opposites but complementaries. They are friends not enemies; they are business partners.

I can understand your question. You would like to be identified with life, so that you can say, 'I am immortal. No death for me.' That is your hankering. And I am not saying that you are not immortal, but the word 'immortal' is not right. You are eternal, not immortal. 'Immortal' means you have no death – always life, always life. 'Eternity' means you don't have either. You are part of this totality that goes on and on – through lives, through deaths, ups and downs, valleys and peaks – and goes on moving. You are that which lives and that which dies, and yet remains aloof... a lotus in the pond, untouched.

It happened, Maharshi Raman was dying. On Thursday April 13th, a doctor brought Maharshi a palliative to relieve the congestion in the lungs, but he refused it. 'It is not necessary, everything will come right within two days,' he said. And after two days he died.

At about sunset, Maharshi told the attendants to sit him up. They knew already that every movement, every touch, was painful, but he told them not to worry about that. He was suffering from cancer – he had a throat cancer, very painful. Even to drink water was impossible, to eat anything was impossible, to move his head was impossible. Even to say a few words was very difficult.

He sat with one of the attendants supporting his head. A doctor began to give him oxygen, but with a wave of his right hand he motioned him away.

Unexpectedly, a group of devotees sitting on the verandah outside the hall began singing 'Arunachala-Siva' – a BHAJAN that Maharshi liked very much. He liked that spot, Arunachala, very much; the hill he used to live upon – that hill is called 'Arunachala'. And the BHAJAN was a praise, a praise for the hill.

On hearing it, Maharshi's eyes opened and shone. He gave a brief smile of indescribable tenderness. From the outer edges of his eyes tears of bliss rolled down.

Somebody asked him, 'Maharshi, are you really leaving us?'

It was hard for him to say, but still he uttered these few words: 'They say that I am dying – but I am not going away. Where could I go? I am always here.'

One more breath, and no more. There was no struggle, no spasm, no other sign of death: only that the next breath did not come.

What he says is of immense significance – 'Where could I go? I am always here.' There is nowhere to go. This is the only existence there is, this is the only dance there is – where can one go? Life comes and goes, death comes and goes – but where can ONE go? You were there before life.

That's why Zen masters go on saying to their disciples: Go meditate, and try to see the face that you had before you were born – or sometimes even before your parents were born, or before your grand-parents were born. Look for the original face that you had before you were born.

You were there before birth and you will be there after death. Life is between birth and death. You are not life. You are eternity, you are timelessness. You will be here and now, always and always. But don't call it immortality, because the word 'mortal' comes from 'death'. It is not immortality – it is life-less, it is death-less.

Remember always, whenever you are dropping the duality, drop the WHOLE of it. If you save half, the other half is saved automatically. If you think that you are life, then you will remain afraid of death. Then you can go on convincing yourself that you are not going to die – but you are identified with life, and you know life dies.

Life is an expression, a manifestation. Death is the energy again moving into unmanifestation. Life is one act of the energy, death is another act, but the energy is beyond acts: it is being.

Yakusan's manner of death was a piece with his life – a great Zen master, Yakusan. When he was about to die, he yelled out, 'The hall's falling down! The hall's falling down!' The monks brought various things and began to prop it up. Yakusan threw up his hands and said, 'None of you understand what I meant!' And died.

'The hall' is based on life-and-death duality. The duality is the house, the hall. The duality is falling – that's what Yakusan means when he says, 'The hall is falling down.' The dual is disappearing and

the non-dual is arising... the clouds are disappearing and only the pure sky is left. That pure sky cannot be identified by any word that comes from any pair of any duality. You cannot call it light, because light is a part of darkness, a partner with darkness. You cannot call it love, because love is a partner with hate. You cannot call it man, because man is a partner with woman. You cannot call it any name, because all names are part of dualities.

Hence, Buddha is silent about it. Whenever somebody asks him, 'What will happen to you, Sir, when you leave the body?' he smiles. He does not say a single word – because ALL words will be wrong, inadequate. All words will be false, untrue – because all words come from the dual language. Our language is dual; the non-dual cannot be expressed. That's why Buddha kept silent about God, about the eternal, about the ultimate – he would not say a single word.

A Ch'an story describes how the Abbot Hui-ming approached the master, Hui-neng. Hui-neng is the second great name in Zen history. The first is Bodhidharma, the second is Hui-neng – these are the two foundation-stones of the whole story of Zen. They laid down the whole structure.

Bodhidharma gave the technique, the Zen technique of meditation, zazen – sitting silently doing nothing, and the grass grows by itself. Non-doing, just witnessing. WEI-WU-WEI – action through inaction. For nine years he was sitting just facing a wall, this Bodhidharma – that was his technique that he gave to the world, one of the greatest. All other meditations look childish before Bodhidharma's technique.

Hui-neng gave the koan – another great technique that is very special to Zen. Bodhidharma's technique is not very special to Zen, it comes from Buddha. In that way Hui-neng is more of an original thinker than Bodhidharma; even Bodhidharma is not so original – Hui-neng gave the koan. 'Koan' means an absurd question which cannot be answered, any way you try. It is unanswerable. And one has to meditate on that unanswerable question: 'What is the sound of one hand clapping?' Now, one hand cannot clap. So the answer is, from the very beginning, impossible. But one has to think about it.

And Hui-neng says when you think about that which cannot be thought, by and by, slowly slowly, thinking becomes impossible. One day, suddenly the whole structure of thinking falls to the ground, shattered. Suddenly you are in a state of no-thought. That's what meditation is.

A Ch'an story describes how the Abbot Hui-ming approached Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch, begging for the doctrine. The patriarch said: 'For the moment, concentrate your mind, not letting your thoughts dwell either on good or evil.'

Hui-neng, is just sitting there with his staff, ready to hit. And he says to Hui-ming, 'Just close your eyes. For the moment, concentrate your mind, not letting your thoughts dwell either on good or evil.' Good or evil is just one kind of duality. You can call it life and death, you can call it hate and love, or good and bad – just one kind of duality.

And Hui-neng says: I am sitting here. You just keep your mind alert, so that it does not fall a victim of the duality of good and bad. Don't say anything is good, and don't say anything is bad. Don't judge. If thoughts pass, let them pass. If Buddha passes, don't say, 'Good, I am blessed, I have seen Buddha in my thought.' Or if a prostitute passes, alluring you, don't say that this is bad – 'Why

should this thought occur to me? Why should this prostitute follow me?' Don't call it any name. Buddha passes, let him pass, remain unconcerned. The prostitute passes, let her pass. Remain unconcerned, just remain yourself. When you are not in duality, you are yourself.

After the Abbot said that he was thus prepared, the Patriarch continued: 'Now that you are no longer thinking of either good or evil, recall the aspect of the Abbot Ming as he was before his parents had yet brought him to life.'

Now the second question – when the Ming said, 'I am ready now. Now I am not saying good or bad, I am clean of judgement.'

Must have been a rare man, this Ming himself – must have been meditating. He was a monk, a sannyasin, may have been meditating for years – otherwise it is not so easy. And you cannot deceive a Zen master; you cannot just pretend, 'Yes, I have attained.' Immediately your head will be hit hard.

A Zen master does not believe in politeness, a Zen master does not believe in etiquette, a Zen master is a very wild master. And when the Abbot said, 'Now I am prepared,' Hui-neng said...

'Now that you are no longer thinking of either good or evil, recall the aspect of the Abbot Ming as he was before his parents had yet brought him to life.'

Now go backwards. Find out about yourself, who you were before you were born, what you were before you were born. Think of that consciousness, go into it.

The Abbot, under the impact of these words, abruptly entered a state of silent identification. He then did obeisance and said: 'It is like a man who drinks water. He knows in himself whether it is cold or warm.'

Now he cannot answer; he himself cannot answer. He has tasted, he has known who he was, and who he is, and who he will be – but now he cannot say anything about it. It is unutterable, it is ineffable.

He says only one thing: 'Sir, it is like a man who drinks water. He knows in himself whether it is cold or warm. Now I know, but I cannot tell you.'

So knows Hui-neng, but he cannot tell. So knows Buddha, but he cannot tell. So know I – but I cannot tell what exactly it is.

One thing I can say, but that will be always negative: It is neither life nor death. It is neither time nor space. It is neither body nor mind. It is neither the visible nor the invisible. It is neither good nor bad. It is neither God nor Devil. I can only negate, I can only say that which it is not.

But what it is, you will have to drink. Only when a man drinks water, he knows... whether it is cold or warm.

Question 5

OSHO, WOULD YOU NOT LIKE TO SAY SOMETHING TO ME?

The question is from Anand Fareed. Fareed, I have nothing to say. And all that I say is only to say this, that I have nothing to say. And all that I say to you is just to prepare you for a moment of eternal silence when you also stop saying, and you start being.

Once Buddha asked his disciple, Subhuti, 'Subhuti, what do you think? Does the Buddha expound the Dharma?' Subhuti said, 'World-Honoured One, the Buddha does not expound anything.'

And for forty-two years, Buddha was expounding the dharma. And Subhuti says, 'World-Honoured One, the Tathagata does not expound anything.' And Buddha gave his confirmation to Subhuti's understanding – because another disciple, Ananda, was sitting there, and Ananda said, 'What do you mean? He has been expounding the dharma for forty-two years, continuously – morning, afternoon, evening, year in, year out. What else is he doing?'

But Buddha confirmed Subhuti's understanding, not Ananda's understanding. Subhuti knows – Ananda has only heard the words. And Buddha says, 'Ananda, you will have to wait to know. Subhuti is right.'

And it happened, when Buddha died, all the monks, all the disciples, gathered together to collect all the sayings of Buddha. Ananda was not allowed to enter in the hall; Subhuti was the head. Now, this seems strange – but these people called Buddhas are strange people.

Ananda had lived for forty two years continuously with Buddha like a shadow. He had moved with him wherever he had gone, he had slept in his room for forty-two years – he was the only one who was so close. He had heard all that he had said, and his memory was tremendously perfect.

Now Subhuti is the head of the congregation which is going to collect the sayings of Buddha – and the man who had heard him always.... Subhuti was not always with him, rarely – because Subhuti was sent to spread Buddha's message to other parts of the country. So he was rarely there; he had heard Buddha only a few times. He becomes the head, who is going to collect Buddha's sayings – and Ananda, who seems to be the right person to be the head, is not even allowed into the hall.

And Subhuti says to Ananda, 'You sit at the door as a guard – as you used to sit with Buddha too. You sit at the door outside. Unless you become enlightened we are not going to allow you inside.'

And Subhuti, who says Buddha has not expounded anything, becomes the head of the exposition of the dharma scriptures – all that has been collected under the guidance of Subhuti. But this basic understanding is there, this tacit understanding is there, that all this is superficial – because the ultimate cannot be said. But people are foolish, so even a Buddha has to say the ultimate for these foolish people.

Ananda remained outside the hall. Five hundred monks are inside – they are all juniors to Ananda, Ananda is the seniormost. Not only is he the senior-most disciple, he is also a cousin-brother to Buddha – not only a cousin-brother, he is the elder cousin-brother to Buddha. And he is standing there outside, crying.

For twenty-four hours, it is said, he was standing there crying. And after twenty-four hours, something exploded in him, and he understood. He understood why Buddha had confirmed that 'Subhuti is right; Ananda, you are not right. You have only heard my words – and the words are nothing. The reality is silent.'

He danced. And the moment it happened outside the hall, Subhuti was inside, and they were collecting the sayings: suddenly he stopped and he said, 'Call Ananda in. Now he is worthy to be asked in'

The monks went out, they found Ananda dancing. They had never seen this man so blissful, so luminous. And Ananda said, 'Buddha was right, I had been only hearing the words. Now I have heard the soundless sound.'

Subhuti said, 'Now you can also relate whatsoever you know, whatsoever you have heard from Buddha. Now your memory can be trusted, because knowing has arisen. Up to now your memory was just mechanical – it had no light inside it.'

So say I to you, Fareed: I have nothing to say. And if you hear me rightly, that is the message.

Question 6

I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING LIKE SAMADHI OR SATORI EXISTS. UNLESS I MYSELF HAVE EXPERIENCED IT, HOW CAN I BELIEVE YOU ARE THE BUDDHA OR ANYBODY ELSE?

True. Nobody is saying that you should believe. How can you believe? The very expectation is stupid.

Who is telling you to believe? Belief is not being taught here. Belief is the way of ignorance, and by belief a person remains ignorant. A belief is a false substitute – if you start believing, then you are never going to know. Mind you: if you start believing, you have stopped growing. There is no need to believe.

But there is no need to doubt either – that has to be understood. That's what trust is – it is neither belief nor doubt. This will look strange, because ordinarily you think that trust is belief. It is not – trust is neither belief nor doubt.

You need not believe me, you need not doubt me. You can just be here experimentally, hypothetically – 'Maybe this man is wrong, maybe this man is right.' You need not decide. How can you decide? You have to experiment with your consciousness – the decision will come from there.

If I am talking about something that you have not known, there is no way to believe it. And all belief will be a repression, a repression of your doubt. I am not saying believe me. There is just one thing that you can do, if you can do it; don't doubt it, remain open. Because the moment you doubt, you have fallen into the anti-belief.

Don't say, 'What Buddha says is right, or wrong' – don't say anything, there is no need. How can you say 'right' and how can you say 'wrong'? – because you have not tasted it yet. So remain open,

don't get any idea of right or wrong. That openness is trust. And if you are open you will by and by start feeling something is growing in you.

If you are around a man who has SAMADHI, and you are open, SAMADHI will become infectious. If you are open, SAMADHI will start flooding you. If you are open and your doors are open, the light cannot stay out, it will come in.

So I don't say believe in me, because a man who believes is closed. And I say don't doubt either, because the man who doubts is closed. Then who is the man of trust? The man of trust is the man who is open, vulnerable. To be vulnerable is to be in trust.

Doubt or belief, both are a duality of one energy. Drop both. Be here. And don't be afraid and don't be defensive. Doubt is defensive. Doubt says, 'I am afraid. This man may lead me somewhere where I don't want to go.' Nobody can take you anywhere where you don't want to go. And I am not trying to take you anywhere, I am simply trying to bring you HERE. It is not a question of THERE – there is no there. It is only a question of being here, present.

That presence – that presence comes without any belief, that presence comes without any doubt. You listen to me as you listen to the birds in the morning, you listen to me as you listen to music. Somebody is playing sitar – you don't trust, in the way of belief; you don't doubt, in the way of untrust. You are simply open, the way I would like you to be trusting. You are simply trusting. This man is playing, something may happen, you are open. You are available – that's what trust is. You listen. And you don't argue inside yourself as to whether this man is playing beautiful music or not. The obvious reveals itself – there is no need to argue, either way.

If truth is here it will reveal itself. Truth is so convincing, it is self-evident; it need not ask for any belief. Only untruth asks for belief. Truth only says don't be entangled by belief or doubt; remain open and available and things will start happening.

And how can you believe me? I am speaking a different language, you are hearing a different language. I say something, you hear something else – how can you believe me? I am talking of another world, you live in another world. I bring another plenitude to you, where you have never been – how can you believe? But how can you disbelieve, either?

Two centipedes go to the movies. Brigitte Bardot is the star. The show is over.

'A beautiful film,' says one of the centipedes.

'And this Bardot has legs – real class,' responds the other exuberantly. To which the first nods and says: 'Yes, but so few.'

Now, a centipede is a centipede. Unless Bardot has a hundred legs, what does it matter to a centipede? Maybe they are even class – but so few....

The bishop goes to the country. He has a friendly chat with a shepherd. 'How big is your flock?' he asks. 'Five hundred and fifty,' answers the shepherd, who doesn't know the bishop.

'So, in a certain way, we are colleagues – I also have a large flock,' begins the bishop, hinting at his spiritual post.

'Oh?' says the shepherd. 'And how many sheep do you have?'

The bishop reflects, 'Well, it must be a hundred and twenty to a hundred and fifty thousand.'

At which the shepherd clasps his head in his hands. 'Heavens, you must be busy when it comes to mating them!'

Now, a shepherd is a shepherd – his language is his language. When the bishop says, 'I am also a shepherd,' he is using a word for something utterly unknown to this poor shepherd. He cannot understand the symbol, he cannot understand this metaphor.

When I am talking to you, it is all metaphoric. Metaphors have to be used, otherwise you will not understand at all. How can you believe me? – those metaphors are just metaphors for you. Unless they become your own experience, how can you believe me?

And I am not here to help you believe me, I am here to help you know. Belief is not my way. Don't settle for belief – unless you know, belief is meaningless. And when you know, belief is not needed. When you know, you know; then there is no way to believe. And when you don't know, you don't know; there is again no way to believe.

So what is to be done? Trust. Trust has nothing to do with belief, and trust has nothing to do with doubt. It is a love affair. If you have fallen in love with me, if you feel that 'Wherever this man is, it is worth exploring' – that's all. 'It is worth exploring, wherever this man is. In whatsoever space this man exists, it is worth exploring.' THAT'S ALL – that urge to explore is enough.

Let me be your adventure. Not an anchor, but an adventure. I don't want to become a prison for you, I want to become your freedom.

Question 7

I HAD GONE INTO SECLUSION AND SILENCE FOR TWENTY-ONE DAYS, AS YOU HAD TOLD ME. SINCE THEN, I FEEL GREAT POWER IN ME. A DOG WAS BARKING THE OTHER DAY AT ME FEROCIOUSLY. I SAID WITHIN MYSELF, 'STOP!' AND HE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY. THEN I TRIED IT ON A MAN WHO WAS WALKING TOWARDS HIS HOUSE. I SAID INSIDE MYSELF, 'RUN!' AND INSTANTLY HE STARTED RUNNING. AND THEN I TOLD SILENTLY TO A WOMAN WHO WAS WALKING JUST AHEAD OF ME, 'LOOK BACK AND WINK AT ME.' AND SURE, SHE DID. BUT SINCE THEN I AM FEELING VERY WEAK. WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

I HAVE TRIED IT IN MANY OTHER SITUATIONS SINCE THAT TIME, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS. WHAT HAS GONE WRONG?

You have just run out of gas. And in these days of power scarcity you should be a little more careful!

But it happens. Out of silence it happens, one feels powerful – because in those twenty-one days, energy goes on gathering, it becomes a reservoir. You waste your energy by talking. You waste your

energy unnecessarily, for no purpose. You go on dissipating energy – you have a thousand and one leaks in your boat.

When you were silent for twenty-one days, you preserved, you conserved. Then suddenly you had that feeling of power. If it comes another time, don't use it – if you use it, it is again a wastage. Just by stopping a dog from barking... and what is the point of it? Do you want to become a Satya Sai Baba? Don't be so foolish. You wasted it.

But the first time, it happens. This wastage also happens, because the first time you are not aware what is going to happen – the energy is so new. And in the old scriptures it is said that it is exhausted in being used three times. So you have gone very traditionally in your story. The first time when you feel power, shakti, it is just unconscious – unawares you use it. The dog was barking, you suddenly said, 'Stop!' Not that you had deliberately thought about it – just that the power was there, and the power forced you to say it. And you were not expecting that the dog would stop – dogs don't listen so easily. But when the dog stopped, you were puzzled. You must have thought maybe it was just a coincidence.

Hence, you tried the next time – to see whether it was just a coincidence. But the next time you were more conscious, more deliberate. Still, maybe it was just coincidence, you were not confident yet, so you told the man who was walking towards home: 'Run!' And he started running. Now this can't be again a coincidence. Once, it is okay – but twice, it is too much.

The third time you tried, you had become almost an egoist. You knew it happens; you knew now you can do something. Now you tried with a woman – she should look back and wink at you. And she did. And now the ego must have soared high; it must have peaked. And when the ego enters, one becomes weak again.

The power can become very very ego-fulfilling if you use it. So all the secret scriptures of the world say: When this power happens to you, please be aware, don't use it.

I will tell you one story, it is a beauty. Meditate over it.

There was this bloke, see, and he hadn't been able to get the bonk...

Now, I am not going to tell you what 'bonk' is. You will understand it as the story proceeds.

So there was this bloke, see, and he hadn't been able to get the bonk for a year. He was pretty upset about it, see, and of course his wife was too – I mean, a year's a pretty long time. He went to several doctors, and none of them could do a thing. Finally, in desperation, he sought the help of a shrivelled-up little old witch-doctor he'd heard about, down in seedy Soho.

And the witch-doctor said yes, he could help – and gave him a nasty little shrivelled-up black pill. 'Take this,' said the witch-doctor, 'and then use this magic formula. You yell at the top of your lungs: 'Rrrraaaarrraaaaarraaaa!' and you'll get a beautiful bonk. When you want it to go down again, you say: 'Shhhhhh...' and it'll go away. But remember, it only works three times.'

Full of gratitude and expectation, the guy leaves. And he's standing at the bus stop waiting for the bus, when he thinks, 'Let's just give it a try.' So he opens his mouth and goes: 'Rrrraaaar-

maaaaarrrraaaa!' And immediately, it is there. But two little old ladies start screaming for the police, so he has to say: 'Shhhhhh....' And sure enough, it disappears in a second.

He continues towards home, and then he thinks, 'I'll just stop by the pub and show the lads.' So he goes into the pub, says 'Hey, boys, you've got to see this.' And they all go back to the gents and crowd around him, and he goes: 'Rrrraaaarrrraaaarrrraaaa!' and sure enough, it is there again. The guys are amazed. 'Aw, you ain't seen nothin' yet,' he says. 'Watch this.' And he says 'Shhhhhh...' and it disappears in a minute.

Pleased as punch, he sets off home. He goes inside, creeps up the stairs in the dark, trembling with anticipation, takes a deep breath, opens the bedroom door, and goes: 'Rrrraaaarrrraaa-rrrraaaa!'

'Shhhhhh!' says his wife. 'You'll wake the children!'

So this is what has happened to you. Next time, please be a little more aware. Whenever you feel powerful, remember: this power can be lost very easily. And you have all the mechanism to lose it – your whole past is a leaking past. It is your past that has played a trick upon you, it is your past that has managed to befool you. By stopping the dog barking, or making a man run, it is your past that has befooled you.

You have run out of gas. Next time you feel powerful again, remain powerful – don't use it at all. If you remain powerful, without using it.... The urge will be there; the urge can become very great, you can become very restless – because the power is there, and you can do something foolish with it. And all that you can do is foolish, it doesn't matter what it is.

If you can keep yourself cool and calm, and the power remains and remains, and the urge goes to use it – then YOU REALLY become powerful. And then that power is no more in the hands of the ego; it slips deeper. Then the ego is no more strengthened by it. In fact now it becomes your humbleness, your egolessness.

And when power becomes humble – when it becomes simple, egoless – then God starts functioning through you. When you are powerful, only then can you become a medium of God. You can become a vehicle.

Many lotuses are waiting to bloom in you, but they need power. Rather than stopping a dog barking, let the power go inside you, let it permeate your whole being. Many lotuses, a thousand and one lotuses, will flower in you. Don't be foolish again. If it has happened once, it will happen again – there is no problem in it. Next time be a little more alert, aware. And don't play into the hands of the unconscious.

CHAPTER 7

An Explosion of Insight

27 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

SOME CHILDREN WERE PLAYING BESIDE A RIVER. THEY MADE CASTLES OF SAND, AND EACH CHILD DEFENDED HIS CASTLE AND SAID, 'THIS ONE IS MINE.' THEY KEEP THEIR CASTLES SEPARATE AND WOULD NOT ALLOW ANY MISTAKES ABOUT WHICH WAS WHOSE. WHEN THE CASTLES WERE ALL FINISHED, ONE CHILD KICKED OVER SOMEONE ELSE'S CASTLE AND COMPLETELY DESTROYED IT. THE OWNER OF THE CASTLE FLEW INTO A RAGE, PULLED THE OTHER CHILD'S HAIR, STRUCK HIM WITH HIS FIST AND BAWLED OUT, 'HE HAS SPOILT MY CASTLE! COME ALONG ALL OF YOU AND HELP ME TO PUNISH HIM AS HE DESERVES.' THE OTHERS ALL CAME TO HIS HELP. THEY BEAT THE CHILD WITH A STICK AND THEN STAMPED ON HIM AS HE LAY ON THE GROUND.

THEN THEY WENT ON PLAYING IN THEIR SAND-CASTLES, EACH SAYING, 'THIS IS MINE; NO ONE ELSE MAY HAVE IT. KEEP AWAY! DON'T TOUCH MY CASTLE.'

BUT EVENING CAME; IT WAS GETTING DARK AND THEY ALL THOUGHT THEY OUGHT TO BE GOING HOME. NO ONE NOW CARED WHAT BECAME OF HIS CASTLE. ONE CHILD STAMPED ON HIS, ANOTHER PUSHED HIS OVER WITH BOTH HIS HANDS. THEN THEY TURNED AWAY AND WENT BACK, EACH TO HIS HOME.

Life is a paradox. It exists through the paradox; that's its very way of existence. the moving wheel moves on and unmoving axle, and at the very center of a cyclone there is silence. At the very core of life there is death. This is how things are, existence is through contradiction.

Existence continuously contradicts itself, and out of contradiction is born the energy to live. Out of the tension between the contradictions is this whole play, the game. This is the dialectics – the thesis

and the antithesis. And the constant conflict between the thesis and the antithesis creates energy, generates energy. Out of the friction the energy is created.

You can look around, and everywhere you will find contradiction functioning – between man and woman, between day and night, between summer and winter, between success and failure, between birth and decay. Continuously, everywhere, the game is based on the very foundation of paradox. If you don't understand this, you will live a life of misery. If you don't understand this, if it doesn't get deep into your heart and become a luminous understanding to you, you will live a life of anguish. Because you will never be able to accept this contradiction – you will never be able to see that this contradiction is not really a contradiction; the opposites function as complementaries.

Once seen in that light, life becomes enlightened. Then you are full of awareness. Then you know that there is nothing wrong in death – not only that, you know that without death life will not be possible at all.

So life owes its all to death. Then death is not against life; it is not the enemy, it is the friend. Seeing this, the fear of death disappears. Seeing this, anguish disappears, anxiety disappears. Seeing this, a great rejoicing arises in your being. Not seeing this, there is conflict. Misunderstanding is what your misery is. Understanding is bliss, misunderstanding is the cause of misery.

Now try to penetrate into your innermost core and see how things are there, and what you are doing with them. If man looks withinwards he finds there, at the very core, just pure nothingness. That's why people don't look withinwards.

Socrates goes on saying, 'Know thyself.' The Upanishads go on shouting, 'Go within! Withinwards is the journey.' Buddhas go on persuading you to go in, and you continuously go out. You don't bother what Buddhas say. Even if you listen, you listen only with half your ear – you listen one moment, you forget next moment. Because deep down you know that to look withinwards is to look into nothingness. There is nothing. And that is scary, that frightens.

At the very core there is nothingness. The wheel of all moves on that axle of nothingness. So, afraid of the inner nothingness, we go on rushing into the world. The fear of one's own non-being takes you on a thousand and one journeys. That's what Zen people call 'the world of a thousand and one things'. You go on rushing into this direction, into that. You have to rush, because if you don't rush you will stumble upon your nothingness... and there is fear. You are frightened of that – you don't want to see that you are not.

Your being is non-being: you are not ready to look into it, to accept it. You are death living. Death is there, and at the very core of your being there is just emptiness – what Buddha calls anatta. There is no self, there is no being, there is no 'I'. And somehow everybody knows it – hence nobody goes inwards, everybody goes outwards. Outwards you can befool yourself, you can deceive yourself. You can create a thousand and one games, you can play with those games – they are not going to help, but still you can pass your time with those games. You can become so engrossed in them that for those engrossed moments you can forget your inner nothingness.

But this inner nothingness is not like an accident. It is not accidental, it is your very being. So you cannot escape from it, do whatsoever you want to do. Nobody has been able to escape from it. You

can go on postponing, you can go on delaying that experience, but one day or other, that experience has to be gone through.

And that day is the day of great blessing, when you come to know your inner non-being. Because with that experience all fear disappears. When you know you are not, how can you be afraid – of what? for what? And WHO can be afraid? When you know you are not, where can desire exist? with whom? for whom? from whom? Tanha disappears, becoming disappears.

When you are not, how can you become somebody? Knowing one's non-being, there is great rest. The seeker has disappeared, the desirer is no more, the becomer has not been found. So the foundation has disappeared – and the whole palace made of playing-cards simply shatters to the ground.

Unless you come to know this inner non-being – anatta, non-existence, or death.... Zen people call it 'the great death'. It is no ordinary death. Ordinary death does not make much difference – here you die, there you are born immediately. You leave one body – you have not even left it, and already you are entering into another womb. It does not make much difference.

The real death is when you come face to face with your inner non-being, the abyss. One gets frightened, one wants to go away from it. One wants to keep it at the back, one wants to fill it. That's what people go on doing.

SANSARA, the world, is nothing but an effort to fill this inner vacuum. Fill it with money, fill it with women, fill it with men, fill it with power, fill it with anything – big houses, fill it with fame – but fill it. Go on throwing things into it – so one day you can feel you are not just nothing, you ARE somebody, you ARE something. But it never happens, it CANNOT happen. Because the abyss is bottomless – you can go on throwing things into it, they go on disappearing.

There is a very famous Sufi story. A beggar came to an emperor. Just by chance, the emperor was coming out of his palace for a morning walk. And the beggar was standing there, so the emperor asked, 'What do you want?' The beggar laughed. He said, 'You are asking as if you can fulfill my desire! "What do you want?" you say!'

The king was offended, challenged. He said, 'Yes, I can fulfill your desire. What is your desire? you just tell me.' And the man said, 'Think twice before you promise anything.'

The beggar was no ordinary beggar, the beggar was the emperor's past-life master. And the master had promised, 'I will come and try to wake you again in your next life. This life, you have missed – but I will come again.'

But the king had forgotten completely – who remembers about past lives? So he insisted, 'You just tell me, and I will fulfill it. You just tell me. I am such a big emperor – what can you desire that I cannot give YOU?'

And the beggar said, 'It is a very simple desire. You see this begging-bowl? Can you fill it with something? Anything will do. I don't ask diamonds, and I don't ask gold – anything! Can you fill it?'

And the emperor said, 'Yes! You seem to be mad! Why can't it be filled?' He called one of his viziers and told the vizier, 'You fill this man's begging-bowl with money.' And the vizier went. It was a small begging-bowl, but soon the king was getting afraid. Money was being poured, and the moment you would pour it, it would disappear. And the begging-bowl remained empty, and remained empty, and remained empty.

The whole palace gathered together. By and by, the rumour went into the capital; people started coming from all corners. There was a huge crowd, and the prestige of the emperor was at stake. And he was a man of his word. He said to his viziers, 'If the whole kingdom is lost I am ready to lose it, but I cannot be defeated by this beggar. The bowl is something magical – but I will have to prove to him that I also have something to fill it.'

His treasures started becoming empty. And people are running and rushing out of the palace, trying to pour into that begging-bowl – and that begging-bowl seems to be bottomless, everything immediately disappears into it. You cannot see it again; once it has gone in, it has gone out of existence. It simply dematerializes – or what?

Then diamonds and pearls and emeralds... and they started disappearing. Soon the vizier said to the king, 'This seems to be impossible. You will have to accept defeat. And this man does not seem to be an ordinary beggar, he cannot be. There is some message in it. You surrender to this man!'

It was evening, and the whole capital had gathered there, and people were standing there in utter silence. There was such great excitement: 'What is going to happen?' Finally, the king dropped at the feet of the beggar and said, 'Sir, excuse me. It was wrong of me to pretend that I have anything. I have nothing to fill your begging-bowl. Just one thing – what is the secret of this begging-bowl? Just tell me one thing. I am defeated, you are victorious – before you leave me, just fulfill my curiosity. How has this begging-bowl been made, of what?'

And the beggar laughed. And the beggar said, 'Don't you remember me at all? Have you forgotten me completely? Look into my eyes! I am your old master. And this is what I was teaching you in the past life too, but you didn't listen. This begging-bowl has no magic! It is simply made out of the human heart. There is no secret in it; this is how the human heart is.'

The mysterious begging-bowl. Go on throwing things into it – you go on throwing worlds into it, and they dematerialize and they disappear. And one is never satisfied, never never.

Have you ever seen a man who is satisfied? If you have ever seen a man who is satisfied, then that will be the man who has accepted his nothingness. That's what we mean by a Buddha. That's what we mean by enlightenment – whose emptiness has become luminous, full of light. He knows, 'It is me, it is my being. This non-being is my being.' And he has accepted it. And now there is no effort to destroy it, no effort to fill it. It is beautiful as it is.

This understanding transforms life. Otherwise we go on rushing. Go into one desire: what is the mechanism of the desire? When you go into a desire, great excitement comes into your being, great thrill, adventure. You feel a great kick. Something is going to happen, you are on the verge of it. You will be having this big house, this big garden, this beautiful woman, this yacht, this car – you are going to have this, and there is great excitement. And then you have the car, and you have the

yacht, and you have the house, and you have the woman... then suddenly all becomes meaningless again.

What happens? Your heart has dematerialized it. The car is standing in the porch, and suddenly there is no excitement any more. The excitement was only in getting it, because in getting it you became absorbed. You became absorbed, you forgot your nothingness. You became absorbed so much that your mind became overpowered by the desire. You became so drunk with the desire that you forgot your inner nothingness. Now, the desire fulfilled, the car in the porch, the woman in your bed, the money in your bank-balance – again, excitement disappears. Again the emptiness is there, yawning within you, ready to eat you up.

Again you have to create another desire, to escape from this yawning abyss, from this death that is waiting for you there. It can swallow you in a single moment – if you don't cling to something, it will swallow you. So you start again. You start thinking of other houses, of other women, of other places, of other towns.... That's how, from one desire to another desire, one goes on moving. That's how one remains a beggar. From one desire to another desire, one goes knocking on a thousand and one doors. And nothing ever is fulfilled.

Have not you seen, the rich people are the most bored people in the world? Why? Their desires are fulfilled – and nothing is fulfilled. They have the most beautiful house that they wanted – now what? Now they cannot think of anything more beautiful. I know a few rich people who have all that they can have. Now what? Now suddenly they come to a dead end.

Once an astrologer said to Alexander the Great: 'Sir, you are going to win the whole world. It is in your destiny, you will win. But let me remind you of one thing: when you have won the whole world, what will you do? Because there is no other world.'

And it is said, Alexander became sad in his life for the first time. Suddenly, the idea, the very idea is frightening – 'You will win the whole world, then what?' You can understand, in that moment suddenly he is thrown back to his emptiness.

Yes, you can win the whole world, but your heart is such; the whole world will become meaningless. The moment you have it, it becomes meaningless. See this logic: the moment you have something, it immediately becomes meaningless. If you are intelligent enough you will see it immediately. The car in the porch, and meaningless. The woman in your bed, and meaning has already disappeared.

I have heard about Lord Byron, one of the greatest poets of the English language, that he fell in love with many women – nearabout sixty in his whole life. He would fall in love one day, and the next day he was finished – he would make love to a woman once, and finished. Must have been a man of great intelligence. To make love to the same woman again, needs a kind of stupidity. He must have been a man of great intelligence – if he had been in India, he might have achieved Buddhahood.

One woman finally persuaded him for marriage, because she wouldn't allow him to make love to her unless he got married to her. She knew that many women had come into his life: once he makes love to the woman, the woman becomes meaningless. He turns away, as if he has not known the woman at all. All his energy and all his love and all his romance simply disappears, as if it has never been there.

Listening to all these stories, one woman insisted that she would not allow him to touch her-body unless he got married to her. And he became more and more excited – the more he was denied, naturally, the more he desired. He became almost crazy about that woman. Finally he agreed to get married.

One has to be very crazy to get married – real crazy, mad. And women have some intuitive understanding about this. They don't allow anybody to come too close unless they feel they are settled in a marriage, unless the law protects them. Otherwise love disappears like a dewdrop in the morning sun, unless solid law is there. Marriage IS solid law, you can depend on it. It has the court and the policeman and the magistrate – everything behind it.

Just love is a very vulnerable dewdrop – in the morning sun it can disappear any moment. One moment it is there, another moment it is gone; you cannot depend on it. Women are very earthly, they have an intuitive feeling that love won't last long. Before it disappears, have the solid law to help you.

This woman was really intelligent, she forced marriage. Byron got married. While they are coming out of the church – the church-bells are still ringing, the guests are greeting, congratulating.... Hand in hand, Byron comes out of the church, descends the steps – and suddenly the woman feels he is not there. He sees a beautiful woman passing by on the road. He has moved, his energy is no more there. His hand is there, but dead – that throb of love is no more there, his heart is not there in the hand. And the woman says, 'What are you thinking? Where have you gone?'

Byron was a very honest man that way. He said, 'Sorry, but it seems the marriage is finished. That woman has taken all my heart. And I know that just a few hours before, I was hankering for you, I was ready to do anything. I was ready to die, if that was going to solve the thing. But suddenly, knowing that you are mine, it doesn't feel that much of an adventure. Now your hand is in my hand; suddenly I possess you. And any desire to possess you has disappeared.'

This is great intelligence. I love this man Byron. He has been condemned by his own country very much – he was expelled from his country, because people became very much afraid of him. It is said that when Byron would enter into a hotel, into a restaurant, people would just escape with their wives from there. He was really a lovely man! Then all husbands gathered together against him, and all fathers gathered together against him, and finally he was forced to leave England. And it is said, when he was leaving and was saying goodbye to his country, thousands of people gathered to see him. And in those thousands of people there were hundreds of women pretending to be men, in men's clothes – even from the royal family, from rich families – to see the last of Byron.

He was really a beautiful man – very very intelligent, very very handsome. He was REALLY a poet; the poetry was throbbing in his very being. But he was expelled – the country could not afford him, he was too dangerous. But his insights are very very significant. Look at this insight: he says to the woman... must have had great courage to say it to the woman – and just now they have got married! And the bells are still ringing and the guests have not even departed, and they are coming out of the church and he says, 'Sorry, but I am no more interested in you.'

Such authenticity, such sincerity, is the quality of a religious man. Byron was unfortunate that he was born in England, he should have chosen India. He would have become a Buddha – this very

understanding makes a man a Buddha. If a man of such intelligence finds the right path, he will simply jump into a flame, will become a flame of Buddhahood.

Whenever you are attaining something, you immediately start losing interest in it. You all know it, it has happened to everybody in one way or other. You may not say it, you may not even say it to yourself, you may not accept it. Because it is so frightening, that you had been working for seven years to raise enough money to purchase a house – now you have purchased the beautiful house in the mountains, and suddenly, the moment the house is yours and you have the papers in your hands, you are no more interested.

But this is how things are – an intelligent person will see it immediately. A stupid person will take a few months, a few years, but that is not the point – he will also see one day that there is nothing. It proved an illusion. Your whole life proves it again and again – every desire frustrates, every desire lands you into frustration. And the only way you know how to get out of that frustration is to create a bigger desire.

Now, this is foolishness. This is what Buddha calls avidya – ignorance. Seeing all desires fail, you don't see that desire as such is going to fail. The day you understand that the desire as such is going to fail, comes the turning-point in your life – a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn. That's what Christians call 'conversion' – it means 'turning inwards'.

Buddha has the right word for it, he calls it PARAVRITTI – turning back. PARAVRITTI – a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn: seeing that every desire is going to fail, no desire can succeed – it cannot succeed, by its very nature. Desire is just a postponement; when you have the thing it becomes meaningless. It exists only while you are waiting, it exists only while you are searching, it exists only on the path. When the goal is achieved you are finished – you will need another desire.

I have heard a very ancient parable. There was a valley in the Himalayas, a very rich valley. People were affluent, there was more than they needed – more fruits than they needed, more crops than they needed, more milk, more butter, than they needed – everything was more. And the valley was so fertile that one man would work and the whole family would rest. That was enough, one man working was enough for the whole family.

Soon they got very much bored. There was nothing much to do – everybody had everything that was available, everything that was needed. They got so bored, they started thinking what to do with life; life seems to be meaningless. Remember, whenever a society becomes rich, you will immediately find schools of philosophers arising who will say life is meaningless.

That's what is happening in the West; existentialists say life is meaningless. Sartre, Kafka, Camus – they say life is meaningless, life has no meaning. It happens only when the society is rich, it is the symbol of a rich society – immediately, philosophers bubble up who say life is meaningless.

In a poor society, nobody ever says life is meaningless; life has infinite meaning. Small things have meaning – to have a shelter, to have food for your children, to have clothes for your wife, to have a new sari for your woman, or a new ornament, is enough to have meaning. There are so many things you don't have, and because you don't have them there is much meaning around you – you can have this, you can have that, you can have thousands of things, and you don't have them. So you go on from one desire to another, and meaning goes on existing.

When you have all, meaning falls flat on the ground. That happened in that valley, that's what is happening in America; people have become very bored. Boredom has settled in America.

In that valley, people became very bored. And of course the king was the most bored man. And the king asked the people: 'Find out some way, find out some adventure, find out some way that the valley can start working for it. Anything will do.'

Many proposals came. One young man stood up and he said, 'Look, that peak of the Himalayas, towering high in the sky above the clouds – we should climb that.' People laughed. They said, 'Nobody ever heard of it. And how can we climb it? It is dangerous. And the gods will be very angry.' And the priest was very against it. He said, 'We worship that peak. How can we climb it? That will be sacrilege.'

But the king was very much interested. He said, 'This appeals to me.' It was pointless – but when you are bored, anything is good. That's how human beings are reaching to the moon it is pointless, utterly pointless, but... anything to give you a thrill, to give you a kick.

Have you not seen it? When the first man walked on the moon, the whole of humanity was thrilled. People were glued to their chairs before their T.V.'s. But do you know? – within half an hour they were finished too. Within half an hour they were tired, finished! There is nothing much on the moon. And now nobody talks about the moon much – now they are talking about Mars, and other things.

The king was interested, and he said, 'You arrange it. Arrange a group, and I will give you all the money needed. Yes, this peak HAS to be conquered. Standing there, just in front of us, it is a challenge.'

The priest tried to convince the king that it is futile – 'Even if we climb it, what is going to happen?' He said, 'That is not the point. Who bothers about what is going to happen? The climb itself is going to be beautiful.' And the valley was agog. And the people started working hard, making things to go up the peak – because nobody had tried it before, so no instruments existed.

Years passed, people by and by started succeeding in going up. One generation passed, another generation passed, the third generation managed to reach. When they were reaching just close to the peak, one old man, who had lived through all these three generations and had helped them, and was one of the most prominent guides – he said, 'Wait, I am afraid. If we reach to the top – and now it is within reach, within an hour we will reach – what will we do next?'

And they all fell silent and sad. And the boredom was back. For three generations they had not known any kind of boredom. For three generations they were really in a great enthusiasm – the spirit of adventure was roaming around, they were overwhelmed by the idea. It was meaningless, it was futile, but it was keeping their boredom away. Suddenly....

And the story says this was the same man, who had become old – this was the same man who had proposed in the first place: 'We should go and conquer the Himalayan peak.' He said, 'My sons, it is better we should go back and try again. Because there are no more peaks around; this is the biggest. Once you have conquered it, what will you do, tell me?'

And it is said they thought over it, they contemplated – and by and by, they came back to the valley and started trying to climb the peak again.

That's how it goes, that's how it is. You must have heard the Greek myth of Sisyphus, that the gods punished him. And the punishment is very strange – he has to carry a rock to the peak of a mountain. The rock is heavy, and as he goes up it becomes heavier and heavier. It is a very arduous task to bring it to the peak, it takes years. By the time he reaches to the peak, the rock rolls down. That is the punishment – he has to go back to the valley, pick up the rock again, and move it.

In the Greek mythology, it is said the gods were very angry and they punished Sisyphus. To me, it doesn't look so. In fact, a better punishment would have been if the rock never came back to the valley. Then what would Sisyphus do, do you know? He would commit suicide on that rock.

The Greek gods don't seem very intelligent. You should learn from Indian gods. If it was an Indian myth, the punishment would have been this – that he climbs, as he comes higher the rock becomes lighter, things become easier – easier and easier and easier. Because when things are hard, there is joy. When things become easy, your ego is not challenged, there is no more joy. As he comes to the top, finished. What is Sisyphus going to do now? The Indian gods would leave him there with his rock on the top of the mountain. What will he do? He will hit his head against the rock and die.

The Greek myth does not seem to be like a punishment, it seems to be a reward. It looks like punishment because we don't understand life. The moment he reaches, the moment he has just arrived, the rock slips back, goes down to the valley. Sisyphus has to run down, find the rock again – that is his punishment. Again he starts carrying it.

This is how it is happening in life. Every time you bring one desire to completion, it slips back into the valley, you have to go back. You have to desire again, you have to desire afresh. Again life has a thrill, again you can avoid your inner nothingness. This is called sansara – the world. Avoiding yourself is what sansara is all about – escaping from yourself, keeping your innermost core at the back. Getting lost in the cyclone and never looking at the silent center. Getting caught in the wheel and the spokes, never getting centered in the unmoving axle.

But the wheel moves on an unmoving part, and the cyclone exists on a silent center. So is life, life is like a wheel. And deep at the innermost core there is non-being – anatta, no-self. Shunyata, nothingness. And remember, 'nothingness' does not just mean mere nothingness; it is the source of all. All has come out of it, it is the seed of all. 'Nothingness' simply means no thing-ness – there is no thing-hood there. It is a formless space, it has no boundaries.

Once you start getting in tune with this formless void, once you start getting in harmony with it, once you stop escaping away from it, the journey towards home has started. The day you arrive into this empty space.... And you rejoice in it – you don't feel alien, strange to it, you rejoice in it. And it is a blessing.

The Western mind feels very very embarrassed with the idea – 'How can nothingness be a joy?' You have always been trying to BE; nothingness seems like death, annihilation. How can nothingness be a joy? That's why the Western philosophers think that Buddha is the greatest pessimist in the world. He is not; this is an interpretation. The Western mind thinks, 'To move into a nothingness, what joy can be there?'

But you don't understand. When you find you are not, there cannot be any anxiety. Now even death cannot make you afraid. You are already not, so death cannot destroy anything. You are free of death. When you find you are not, you are no more concerned with success or failure; there is nobody to succeed, nobody to fail. Equanimity arises, all is equal. When you come to see this nothingness, how can you be tense? How can there be stress and strain? There is nothing to create any tension; no ripple arises in nothingness. You become non-tense, you relax.

This nothingness is a great rest, utter rest. Everything has stopped, everything has come to a halt. Now whatsoever happens makes no difference, you are not stirred by it. You become rich, you are not stirred. You become poor, you are not disturbed. You succeed, it is okay. You fail, it is perfectly okay. Everything remains good – equilibrium has arisen in your being. Now you are balanced, utterly balanced. Life goes left, okay. Life goes right, okay. It doesn't matter; nothing matters any more.

This is what we call joy. Joy is not synonymous with happiness, joy is FAR transcendental. Joy is neither unhappiness nor happiness. Joy is a state of being which remains unperturbed, undisturbed, whatsoever happens around. The cyclone goes on thundering, but at the innermost core everything is silent. Tranquility has arisen.

This is what we call SAMADHI. And there are only two ways in the world: one is to go away from yourself, one is to come to yourself. To go away, there are a thousand by-paths. Somebody may go away through money, somebody may go through power, somebody may go through sex, somebody may go through alcohol, drugs – a thousand paths, by-paths. But they basically belong to one direction – going without, going outwards, going outside. Going farther and farther away from the center towards the periphery. And that periphery exists not.

So you go on and on and on – more and more discontent, more and more dissatisfaction, more and more anguish. The ultimate result is madness. If the West goes to its logical conclusion, the whole Western society is going to be mad. If this outgoing mind is stretched to its very extreme, then only madness can happen, nothing else. The ultimate result is madness.

The other journey is inwards. Come back home, move inwards. As you start moving inwards, more silence, more tranquility, more equanimity, more equilibrium, more centeredness, more groundedness – they start happening on their own accord. The day you have arrived home, suddenly there is joy.

Listen to these words. Christmas Humphreys says:

'Then comes the jump.... But the abyss into which we fall is found to be the plenum/void. The leap is from thought to no-thought – from the ultimate duality of illusion/reality to a burst of laughter and a cup of tea. But with what new eyes do we view the saucer! and in what serenity of mind do we clear the table away!'

Everything remains as it is. You drink tea, and you have to clear the table too. But with what serenity! with what silence with what grace!

The dance continues, but now there is no longer any dancer. And when the dancer is not, dance has a grace. When the dancer is not, all self-consciousness disappears, because there is no self. When

all self-consciousness disappears, dance becomes total, utterly total. Then there is only dance – no dancer. The presence of the dancer is always a disturbance in the dance. The more you are self-conscious, the less your life will have joy, because the more it will be fragmented, divided – it will be more schizophrenic, it will be more split.

When you are total – so total that the action is all, and there is no actor behind it – then grace, then a new beauty, a new benediction, enters into your life.

You go on living the same way – that's what Zen goes on emphasizing. You still carry water from the well, you still chop wood, you still cook food – but with what serenity, with what grace! How miraculous! to go on continuing in this beautiful world without a self. Then trees communicate to you, then birds communicate to you, then rocks communicate to you.

It is the self that is always going against communication, it is the self that always comes in-between. It is the self that does not allow you to flow; it keeps you confined.

Empty-handed and vulnerable we come into the world, empty-handed and vulnerable we are going to leave it. Empty-handed and vulnerable must we be in it too. And then life is religious. Empty-handed we come, that is true. Empty-handed we will have to go, that is true. Then why, just in between these two, should we start being possessive? When empty-handed we come and empty-handed we go, why not remain empty-handed in between too? If you can remain empty-handed in between too, a nothing – non-possessive, non-acquiring, non-ambitious, with no self hankering for becoming – your life is religious.

A religious person is not one who wants to become spiritual, no. His spirituality is still part of the world – it is a new desire. A religious person is one who has understood the nature of desire – and in that very understanding, the desire has disappeared. A religious person is a desireless person.

And remember, let me remind you again: Don't start desiring desirelessness.

A religious person is one who has known 'I am not'. When 'I am not', then what is the point of going on collecting things called MINE? It is 'I' that goes on collecting things which are mine – 'my house, my wife, my husband, my money, my prestige, my respectability, my church, my country, my religion, my God, my scripture....' We go on: MY.

This 'my' and 'mine' arise out of the idea of 'I'. And the 'I' exists not – it is a presumption, you have simply assumed. The whole game is shadowy, very false; the basic thing exists not. Before you start moving into the world of 'my' and 'mine', at least have a look to see whether you are. Otherwise your whole effort will be futile. It will be making castles in the sand... castles of Spain.

That's why Zen says – Hui-neng's words: 'All doctrine by nature is dark. Even zazen can be a trap. It is best to pursue no discipline at all. Habit deadens. As for sacred texts, they ought to be destroyed.'

This Hui-neng, what is he saying? He is saying: 'All doctrine by nature is dark.' If you make a doctrine of desirelessness, as Buddhists have made, if you make a doctrine out of the concept of detachment, as Jainas have made, then you will be caught in a new trap. Detachment is not against attachment, desirelessness is not against desire. Desirelessness cannot be desired, and

non-attachment or detachment cannot be practised – because if you practise it, you will get attached to it.

Detachment or non-attachment arises out of the understanding of attachment. Just seeing into the very process of attachment, you see it is meaningless, futile. When it is meaningless, futile, it drops. Not that you drop it, no – if you drop it, you are still there. Now you become a renunciate – you start claiming: 'I am a great renunciate, I am a great saint, I have renounced the whole world.'

If you have renounced the whole world, Buddha says, you have not renounced anything. Because the basic disease still exists. It used to claim money before, now it claims renunciation. But the 'I', the ego, is still there.

Hence, Hui-neng is right: 'All doctrine by nature is dark.' Don't create doctrines; Zen is against all doctrines. Zen says: Just look into reality, that's enough. That's why no scripture is needed. Zen says: Burn all scriptures – because scriptures will just put new ideas into your head, for new peaks to be climbed. Scriptures will give you new desires, new objects, for your becoming, for TANHA. Here you get finished – one day you understand that it is meaningless to rush for money – but then you start rushing for meditation.

One day you start seeing the pointlessness of this world. Then you start thinking of God. Desire has moved, but not disappeared. Desire has taken a new form, but has not dropped. Desire has now assumed a new object, a new territory, a new direction – but desire remains. And if desire remains, the world remains.

Hui-neng's words are: 'Insight is freedom.' Tremendously pregnant are these words. Insight is freedom: you need not do anything, you simply need insight. You simply have to look into things – how they are, how they function, how desire functions – that's all. Let this be very very clear, that insight is freedom. You have not to strive for freedom, you have only to look into things, how they function. How you have lived up to now, look into it. How you are still living this moment, look into it!

For example, you are listening to me. You can listen with desire, and then you will miss the point. Then, listening to me, you will inside be gathering some ideas, how to find a new peak to climb. You will be listening to me in order to practise; then you will miss. You are listening to me, and by the side you are taking notes in your mind: 'This seems to be right. Yes, I should practise it.' Now a new desire is arising, now a new idea is getting hold of you. You are moving again into the world – the world of a thousand and one things.

No, just listen to me with insight. Nothing has to be practised. Let it be decided for ever with me: nothing has to be practised, practice is not the point. Understanding, insight – just look into it. While I am talking to you, forget all about practising, forget all about notes. Forget that you are to do anything with these words that I am saying to you. You are not to do anything, you have just to look into these words as deeply as possible, right now! If you look into these words right now, something will start changing in you. You will see that 'Yes, this is true' – not that you have to practise it, but 'this is true'.

And when truth dawns on you, it transforms you. That's what Jesus means when he says: Truth liberates, nothing else – not doctrines, not theories, not dogmas, not scriptures. Only truth liberates.

But don't ask how to get truth. If you bring the 'how' in, you have brought desire in. The 'how' is the manager of your desiring mind. It always says, 'How? How to do it?' It is not a question of doing at all. Just see it, just see the way it is. See how your mind goes on functioning, how you have functioned up to now. With no motive, have a look into it – with no motive.

'Insight is freedom. Clarity brings choicelessness.' Tremendously beautiful words of Hui-neng: Clarity brings choicelessness. When you are clear, you need not choose; you choose only because you are confused. Choice is out of confusion – choice means, 'Should I go this way, or that way?' You are confused, you cannot see, so you are wavering – 'Should I take sannyas, should I not take sannyas? Should I meditate, should I not meditate? Should I love this woman, should I not love this woman? Should I do in this direction, should I do in that direction?'

These things exist because you are not clear. And your so-called religious teachers, your so-called religious priests, go on giving you what you should do. That is not the work of a real master; these are the pseudo-masters. You go to them with a confused mind, and you say, 'I have two alternatives, a and b. What should I do?' And they say, 'You do a – a is right, b is wrong.' They don't help you to be clear, they don't give you clarity. They simply give you something to cling to, they give you the idea of right and wrong.

Now, life is very mysterious – something is right in the morning, by the afternoon it becomes wrong. Then go to the priest again; then go on following the priest.

A real master never gives you any idea of right and wrong, he simply gives you INSIGHT. Because in the afternoon I may not be with you....

Just the other day, Chinmaya was with me. He has become afraid of death. Good, very good. Doctors have told him that there is some danger for his life, so he is shaking, trembling, for three days he has not been able to sleep. A rare opportunity – because death will come to everybody, but it never comes with such information beforehand.

So he was there last night, and he is very much afraid. And I told him, 'Look into it: What do you have to lose? What have you gained in your life? The fear means that you have much in your life, and death will take it away. What have you got? If you look deeply, and you find that you don't have anything, then what is the fear? You are not going to lose anything.'

I told him to look into the fear of death and get into it as deeply as possible, don't avoid it. Everybody is telling him, 'Forget about it, it is nothing, don't be worried. Some medicine, some operation, something will be done.' Everybody is consoling him, he is consoling himself – finding ways and rationalizations.

I told him to look into the face of death. Death exists at the very center of our being; it is nothing AGAINST US. We are closer to death than we are close to life. Death is closer to us than life is, because life is the wheel revolving, and death is the hub.

And I told him, 'You are fortunate that death is coming with a message, that death has a date with you. And you are also fortunate because I am here, and I can help you to look into death.'

While I was saying these things, I could see he was waiting for some consolation. He didn't want to hear these things, to look into death. He wanted me to say something to him, promise him something. I should say, 'Don't be worried, I will protect you.' He was waiting, in the corner of his eyes, for me to say something consoling.

But a master is not to console you, a master is to awake you. If death is coming, death is coming. Accept it, go into it, have a great insight into it. It may not come – because doctors are not reliable – but why miss this opportunity? It may not come – but if the idea has arisen, then why not go into it? and why not have a taste of it? If it doesn't come, good. If it comes, good – but you be ready for it. You go into it, you go with deep acceptance and receptivity. And in that acceptance and receptivity, something will be revealed to you: your innermost core.

And feeling in tune with this innermost core, all fear disappears.

And I told him, 'You may not die this time – some day you will die. Next time I may not be here to tell you, next time I may not be here to console you. So if I really love you, I will not console you – because next time what will you do when I am not here and you die? Then you will not be able to find a way.'

Consolation is not the way. Insight – what Buddha calls VIPASSANA, looking into. A master gives you clarity to look into things. And when you look into things, the obvious is SO obvious that there is no question of choice. You don't choose then, your clarity leads you – it becomes a lamp, it directs you.

And this is what Buddha says, these were his last words when he was departing from the world. His monks started crying and weeping. He said, 'Stop all this nonsense! Listen to me: Be a light unto yourself. Remember, these are my last words. Be a light unto yourself: APPO DEEPO BHAVA.'

What is this light? This clarity to see into things. If it is death, see into death. If it is love, see into love. If it is life, see into life. If it is anger, see into anger. It is ONE thing: see into it. In the morning it is love, in the evening it may be death. In the afternoon it may be something else, in the night something else again. But if you have the capacity to see into things, you will be able to see the obvious. Once the obvious is known as the obvious, choice disappears.

That's what Krishnamurti means when he says, 'Be choiceless.' But you cannot be choiceless, you cannot CHOOSE choicelessness. You cannot decide one day: 'Now, from now onwards I am going to be choiceless' – this is a choice.

Choicelessness cannot be chosen, desirelessness cannot be desired, non-attachment cannot be practised. This is the message of Zen: Look into things, and the obvious reveals itself. And when you know this is the door and this is the wall, you need not choose from where to go, you go through the door. You don't ask the question: 'Should I go through the wall or through the door?' – you simply go through the door.

Now the story. The story is simple but tremendously beautiful; all beautiful things are always simple. Very obvious, very clear. This is a parable Buddha used many times. In fact it happened; it is not only a parable. Buddha was passing by the side of a river, and he saw these children playing and he

saw this whole thing. Next morning he talked about it – he made a parable out of it. A great parable it is. Go into it with insight into each single word.

SOME CHILDREN WERE PLAYING BESIDE A RIVER.

If you are still playing, you are a child. Your play may be called love, your play may be called politics, your play may be called money. You may be playing in the market, or in New Delhi or in Washington – but if you are still playing then you are childish. If you are still involved in games and taking games very seriously – taking games so seriously that you are ready to fight, kill or be killed – then you are very childish, you are not a grown-up.

SOME CHILDREN WERE PLAYING BESIDE A RIVER.

And the river is the symbol of life. Life flows like a river – and by the side, on the bank, children go on playing a thousand and one games. Life goes on flowing – and we become so engrossed in our games that we forget life completely. Life is flowing within us – but we are engaged in our games, preoccupied.

Preoccupation is a fundamental disease of the mind; it is a way to avoid the river of life. What do I mean by 'preoccupation'? Preoccupation means either you are in the past or you are in the future. Preoccupation means you can be anywhere except herenow. When you are herenow you are not preoccupied. Then there is no occupation – then there is simple clarity, vulnerable openness.

And an unpreoccupied mind is the alert mind, the intelligent mind. And the intelligent mind is in tune with the river of life, flows with it. A preoccupied mind is playing games, and playing them very seriously. You can go into the marketplace and see people playing the game of money, and very seriously. And they will die and all the money will be left here – and while they were here they played the game so seriously.

Go into a capital town and see how people are madly playing the game of power. This word 'capital' is very beautiful, it comes from a root-word 'capita' which means 'head'. So 'capital' means a head city, or a mad city. All kinds of mad people have gathered in capitals.

If God wants to save this world, he can do a single miracle and it will be saved: just let capitals disappear. Suddenly, no New Delhi, no Washington, no Moscow, no Peking, no London. Suddenly all capitals disappear; you will be surprised to see that all mad people have disappeared. They are found in the capitals – if they are not in the capitals, they are moving towards the capitals.

A great game. Millions of people are killed in that game – nationality, and this and that, 'isms'. Communism, fascism, nazism, socialism. China and Russia and America, and India and Pakistan and Bangladesh. And they go on fighting: and very seriously, their very life is at stake. All children, just juveniles; they have missed growing up.

And they go on missing the river of life because they are so preoccupied. Everybody is so confined with his game.... Have you watched people playing chess? They forget the whole world. In chess, people become so absorbed, even if the house gets caught in fire they will not be aware of it. They are down-focused with their false elephants and horses – just symbols!

Everybody is playing a game of preoccupation. If you are listening to me and you have come here as a Christian, you are preoccupied. Or as a Mohammedan, you are preoccupied. Or as a Buddhist, you are preoccupied. Even if you believe in Zen you are preoccupied. All beliefs create preoccupation. If you listen to me and inside your head you go on saying, 'Yes, this the holy Koran also says,' then you are not holy at all. Or, 'Yes, this is what Jesus also says in the New Testament,' then you have not known Jesus at all. You have missed Jesus, and you will miss me too.

'Preoccupation' means: in the past, in the future, never herenow. When you are herenow, there is no game. Games stop, then you flow with the river of life. Then there is spontaneity and there is great intelligence and there is great celebration. Games stop, you don't take things seriously. If you win, good. If you fail, good. It makes no difference. That's what I mean by 'games disappear' — I don't mean that when you become alert, awakened, you don't live life, the ordinary life. You still live the ordinary life, you still chop wood, you still carry water — but with great serenity. You still laugh, you still love — but with a totally different quality.

Now nothing matters. If the woman leaves you, you say good-bye with great gratitude. If your money is stolen, you say, 'Okay, somebody must have needed it.' You are not serious any more, that's all. That seriousness has disappeared. You still continue to play, but you know that these chess-horses and elephants and the king and queen and this and that, they are all just symbols. a metaphor.

SOME CHILDREN WERE PLAYING BESIDE A RIVER. THEY MADE CASTLES OF SAND, AND EACH CHILD DEFENDED HIS CASTLE AND SAID, 'THIS IS MINE.'

And the serious game comes with the 'my' and the 'mine'. THIS IS MINE — the seriousness comes through possessiveness, clinging. Through 'mine' we create an 'I'. The more you have, the more you can call 'my', the bigger 'I' you will have. The bigger the territory of the 'my', the stronger will be the 'I'.

So when you are a president of a country, you have an 'I' like a tower touching heaven. When you are no more a president of a country, you shrink; that tower disappears, you become just a stump of a cut tree.

When you have money you walk with strength. When the money disappears you start wavering. When you have money in your pocket you don't feel so cold, money gives such warmth. When the money disappears from the pocket, suddenly you feel cold and shivering. The warmth is gone, the heat is gone, the energy is gone.

Those children are playing, and each is defending his castle, and the castle is made of sand. All castles are made of sand. There are only sand-castles; there are no other castles. A sand-castle is bound to fall, there is no way to protect it. All protection is meaningless — its very nature is to fall and disappear, it is a sand-castle.

How many castles have you made and they have disappeared? And still you go on making bigger and bigger castles. When a smaller castle disappears, you think maybe a bigger one will be more stable. How many people have lived on this earth before you? And how many millions of millions of castles have disappeared? Castles made by Alexander the Great, and castles made by Nadirshah, and castles made by Akbar — all have disappeared. And it is the same sand — they made them in this same sand, and you are again making them in the same sand.

Seeing it, one drops the idea of 'my' and 'mine'.

THEY KEPT THEIR CASTLES SEPARATE..

Obviously. When you depend on your castle, you have to keep it separate. You have to mark it, you have to fence it. You have to say, 'Don't come in here. This way, the door is closed. This is a private road. Trespassers will be prosecuted. This is mine.'

THEY KEPT THEIR CASTLES SEPARATE AND WOULD NOT ALLOW ANY MISTAKES ABOUT WHICH WAS WHOSE.

Everybody has his own nameplate, and protects the castle very much. And the same castle belonged to some people before you, and the same castle will belong to some people when you are gone. In fact the same castle belongs to nobody; it belongs only to the sand. That abides; people come and go. Games start and disappear, and the sand goes on and goes on. The sand is eternal, castles are momentary.

WHEN THE CASTLES WERE ALL FINISHED, ONE CHILD KICKED OVER SOMEONE ELSE'S CASTLE AND COMPLETELY DESTROYED IT. THE OWNER OF THE CASTLE FLEW INTO A RAGE...

Watch, next time you are in a rage – somebody must have destroyed your castle. Remember – next time you are in anger remember this parable and suddenly you will start laughing. There is NO POINT in being angry, there is no point at all in being in a rage. There is no 'I' and there is no 'mine'. And if the sand-castle has fallen, it had to fall. It was a sand-castle.

THE OWNER OF THE CASTLE FLEW INTO A RAGE, PULLED THE OTHER CHILD'S HAIR, STRUCK HIM WITH HIS FIST AND BAWLED OUT. 'HE HAS SPOILT MY CASTLE! COME ALONG ALL OF YOU AND HELP ME TO PUNISH HIM AS HE DESERVES.'

That's what your law, your court, your police, go on doing. Somebody has destroyed your castle: you say, 'Come on, all of you! and help me to punish this man.' And yes, people will come and help you, because they have to protect THEIR castles too.

So this is an agreement; that's how you punish the criminal. That's how thousands of people are in the prisons being punished by you all, because they disturbed somebody's castle. Somebody has stolen somebody's money, or somebody has taken somebody's cow, or somebody has done some small thing – has stolen a few fruits from YOUR tree. All trees are God's trees. But somebody stole a few apples from your tree and you got into a rage, because you think you are the owner.

Anger comes out of ownership. If you really want to get rid of anger, you will have to drop ownership. Many people come to me and they say, 'We suffer very much from anger. How to drop it?' They think as if anger can be dropped directly – they don't know; it is complicated. Unless you drop ownership you cannot drop anger.

Anger is just a leaf on the tree of ownership. If you own, you cannot drop anger. You own your wife, and somebody goes by and winks at her: anger. How will you avoid anger? Because you own the

wife, she is YOUR wife – how can somebody else dare to laugh at her or smile at her? or throw a kiss at her? She is YOUR wife – you own her, she is a property. The wife becomes mad the moment she sees some woman is trying to play any game with HER husband.

We own people, we own things, we own. Out of ownership comes anger and rage. If you really want to be beyond anger and rage – and who will not want to be, unless you are in deep love with your neurosis? – if you really want to drop your neurosis, ownership has to be dropped. The very idea that 'I OWN anything' is stupid. And then others are there to help. They are afraid about THEIR properties. If somebody trespasses your property and is not punished, then people will start destroying others' properties very easily.

So you are all angry – if you see a thief, you all jump on him. He has not taken your money, he has taken somebody else's money – but all those who are there will jump on him, will beat him, throw him on the ground and stamp on him. And they will say, 'He is a thief. We have to punish him.' But why are you punishing? – he has not taken your money. No, he has not taken your money, but he is a danger – if you allow him to take somebody else's money, some day he is going to take your money too. Then.

So it is better to be cautious, it is better to prevent it from the very beginning. Hence the law exists. The law is always in favour of the owners, the law is always in favour of the people who have property, the law is always capitalistic. It makes no difference – even in Russia, where capitalism has disappeared, the law is all for the state, because now the state owns everything. Whoever owns, the law is the servant of the owner. If the state owns, then the law serves the state. The magistrate, the law, the policemen, the courts, they are in the service of those who HAVE – against those who don't have. The law serves 'haves' against 'have-nots'.

The world cannot be very good where the law itself serves 'haves'. How can law be just? – impossible. It is against the people who have nothing, it is for the people who have everything. It is always in favour of the haves – it is MADE by the haves, it is a conspiracy of the haves against the have-nots. In all societies it has been so, the law is always unjust. Your so-called justice is just a pretension. The world where ownership exists cannot be a just world.

Hence Zen is very anarchistic. I am an anarchist: I believe in a world where law will disappear, I HOPE for a world where law will disappear. Law can disappear only when ownership disappears; it cannot disappear by changing the ownership. In Russia they have changed the ownership – now the have-nots have become the haves, and the haves have become the have-nots. But that doesn't make any difference. Whoever owns will own the law and the law will be with him. Law serves. It serves the powerful, it never serves the weak.

'HE HAS SPOILT MY CASTLE!' SHOUTED THE BOY. 'COME ALONG ALL OF YOU AND HELP ME TO PUNISH HIM AS HE DESERVES.' THE OTHERS ALL CAME TO HIS HELP. THEY BEAT THE CHILD WITH A STICK AND THEN STAMPED ON HIM AS HE LAY ON THE GROUND.

THEN THEY WENT ON PLAYING IN THEIR SAND-CASTLES, EACH SAYING, 'THIS IS MINE; NO ONE ELSE MAY HAVE IT. KEEP AWAY! DON'T TOUCH MY CASTLE!'

Can't you see? – the same game being played in a thousand and one ways, all over the world,

down the ages: 'THIS IS MINE; NO ONE ELSE MAY HAVE IT. KEEP AWAY! DON'T TOUCH MY CASTLE!' This is the whole game called the world.

BUT EVENING CAME...

Evening always comes; you cannot avoid the evening.

BUT EVENING CAME; IT WAS GETTING DARK AND THEY ALL THOUGHT THEY OUGHT TO BE GOING HOME. NO ONE NOW CARED WHAT BECAME OF HIS CASTLE. ONE CHILD STAMPED ON HIS OWN, ANOTHER PUSHED HIS OVER WITH BOTH HIS HANDS. THEN THEY TURNED AWAY AND WENT BACK, EACH TO HIS HOME.

This does not happen, unfortunately, to everybody's life. Evening comes, but you go on clinging to the morning. Evening comes, even death comes – but you go on clinging to life and birth.

Evening comes to everybody, but there are very few fortunate ones who USE the evening and start seeing that nothing belongs to us, and all castles are sand-castles.

And now they are no more concerned what happens to these castles. Not only are they not concerned that nobody should spoil them, they themselves jump upon them and spoil them. It is finished; evening has come. The world is finished. Now the time has come to go back home.

In Zen, 'going back home' means going inside your own being. Use the evening whenever it comes. It comes many times in a life – sometimes it comes as a failure, sometimes it comes as a frustration, sometimes it comes as a sadness, sometimes as depression. Use it. Sometimes as fear, anguish, sometimes as death, illness – but use it. Whenever evening comes, try to see that nothing belongs to you, that you don't belong to anything, that the whole idea of belonging is absurd. See it. And whenever you start feeling that the world outside is meaningless, don't create new meanings in the outside, start moving inwards towards the home.

BUT EVENING CAME; IT WAS GETTING DARK.

Whenever you feel it is getting dark, it is getting sad, it is getting ugly, whenever you feel it is getting to be an unhappy affair, remember – it is a call from the home: 'Come back home; you have played enough.'

... AND THEY ALL THOUGHT THEY OUGHT TO BE GOING HOME. NO ONE NOW CARED WHAT BECAME OF HIS CASTLE. ONE CHILD STAMPED on HIS, ANOTHER PUSHED HIS OVER WITH BOTH HIS HANDS. THEN THEY TURNED AWAY AND WENT BACK, EACH TO HIS HOME.

Go home. Search, seek your inner home. And it is the home of non-being, anatta – nothingness, absolute void. It is formless, it is nameless, it is what nirvana is.

Once you have come home, you will have a totally different vision of things. Then there is joy, celebration. And then there is no evening. Then it is always morning, because then it is always spring. Then it is always a song, and then it is always a dance, it is always a feast.

So next time you feel evening coming and things getting darker, use that opportunity as a jumping-board. Jump into your own being. Disappear there.

Enough you have moved into things; now start moving into nothing, into no-thing. Enough you have looked at others; now start looking into your own self. We are so foolish that even when we look at ourselves, we look at ourselves, not into ourselves. Yes, sometimes you stand before a mirror and look at yourself, but that too is looking at yourself, as if you are somebody else – looking from the outside, looking at the face, at the skin, at the outer.

Enough you have looked at others, and enough you have looked at yourself as the other. Now the time has come – the evening has arrived, darkness is settling. Start looking in. Let there be an explosion of insight. That explosion of insight will transform you... from a caterpillar to a butterfly.

CHAPTER 8

There is No Back of this Book

28 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

Question 1

THE OTHER DAY YOU TALKED ABOUT BELIEF-SYSTEMS. ONE OF MY BELIEF-SYSTEMS WAS THAT I AM IMPERFECT – THAT I HAVE TO STRIVE FOR PERFECTION. DOING THE SLS (SUCCESSFUL LIVING SEMINAR) I GOT THE FEELING THAT I AM PERFECT AS I AM RIGHT NOW – WITH ALL MY ANGER, GRIEF, LOVE, HATE, SADNESS, BOREDOM, DEFENCES, SEX. I THINK YOU ONCE SAID THAT WE ARE GODS BUT THAT WE JUST DON'T RECOGNIZE IT. PLEASE EXPLAIN THE COMPLETENESS OF OUR BEINGS.

This shows how deep a belief-system goes, how it becomes part of your unconscious. Now even the idea of perfection persists. First you were trying to become perfect, now you believe you ARE perfect – but you don't drop the idea of perfection.

First you were trying to become more complete, you had the feeling of incompleteness; still you cling to the old distinction. Now this seems to be cheaper and easier to believe – that you are already complete, you need not go anywhere. But you have to be complete, you have to be perfect. What is wrong in being incomplete? And what is wrong in being imperfect?

Your 'sls' missed; you could not get anything out of it. You remain the same, you have not changed anything; your belief-system remains intact. And sooner or later you will be again in difficulty. Because you will be angry, you will be bored, you will be sad – it is impossible to think that your anger is perfect, that your sadness is perfect, that your boredom is perfect, it is impossible. Sooner or later, again the old snake will start uncoiling itself; again you will start trying.

When you are sad, will you not try to be not sad? When you are miserable, will you not try to come out of it? Will you really accept it totally? When you are in a ditch of darkness, won't you start striving again for light? Again it will come back; you have simply postponed it. You contain everything you contained before, you have simply changed the label on the container. But the content remains the same.

That's not my message. My message is: To be incomplete is beautiful. In fact, to be incomplete is a basic requirement of being alive. The day you are perfect, you are dead. Perfection is death, imperfection is life. Imperfection should not be condemned, but taken as an openness. Imperfection means open – still growing, still moving, still living. Imperfection means you still have a future, imperfection means you still have hope, imperfection means tomorrow will be exciting. That's what imperfection means.

'Imperfection' is not a derogatory word, it is almost synonymous with a living flow. Complete, where will you be going? what will you be doing? 'Complete means growth has stopped, you have come to your very end. All that was potential has become actual – that's what completion means. Now there is nothing else but to die.

Imperfection means there is much still awaiting, much is going to happen. I am not saying strive for it to happen, I am saying it happens if you accept your imperfection, and you live it in totality. These are two different things. To believe that your imperfection is perfect is utterly wrong. But be total in each moment – when you are imperfect be TOTALLY imperfect. And then out of that totality you start growing.

And I am not saying that you will ever become perfect, because the day you become perfect you are no more needed – the perfect ones are discarded immediately. So life never becomes perfect; it goes on moving. From one totality to another totality, from one imperfection to another imperfection, it goes on, it goes on. Imperfection is simply life, aliveness, growth, evolution. So why go on condemning imperfection? Now you think you have got the feeling that 'I am perfect as I am right now'. You are not. But I am not saying strive for perfection; that is again the same trap. I am saying wherever you are, live this moment totally – this is the only way it can be lived.

If you are sad, live it totally. Be really sad. And if you are really sad, you will come out of it sooner. If you are not really sad, half-heartedly you are in it, it will persist longer.

It happens, somebody has died. You loved the man or the woman; a lover is no more there. Then he sad, then be REALLY sad. You owe this much to him. Cry and weep; go crazy. Don't be lukewarm, don't be just so-so. And don't try to console yourself that now it is useless. If you try to console, the sadness will spread over a longer period – it can continue for years. That's how millions of people have become sad. Because they have never lived their sadness, they have been postponing it. When you postpone it, it remains in your unconscious, waiting for the right moment to assert again. It becomes a heavy weight on your heart.

When it is there. pour it. It's perfectly okay to be sad. There is nothing wrong in it, it's how it should be. If you are really sad. Soon you will find the sadness has dissipated, evaporated. You have gone through it, it is finished. Whatsoever the sadness was going to give to you, it has given to you; now there is no need to remain around you. It will go away. And you will come out fresher, younger, more alive. And you will come happier out of it, more experienced, more mature.

A man who has not seen somebody beloved dying has yet to see something, is not really mature. In the East we have a saying: 'You are not mature until you have seen your father die. You are still a child.' When you see your father die, something deep dies in you too. Because the father is your life, the mother is your life, they have given you life. And those who have given life to you are disappearing into death – sooner or later your death is also going to come.

While your parents are alive you can go on believing that you are not going to die. But once your parents are dead, how can you go on believing that you are not going to die? Even those who had given birth to you, they are no more there; the source has disappeared. The roots have disappeared – sooner or later you will disappear.

Live it! Cry, weep, be sad, let tears come. Pour your whole heart into it. Don't be afraid, don't be shy, don't be embarrassed. If you can live it in totality you will come out of it more mature, more grown up, more grounded, and capable of living more happily.

This will look strange – out of unhappiness, how can we live more happily? Yes, this is how it is, this is how it works. Just like the pendulum of a clock – it goes to the right, to the very extreme right, and from there it starts moving to the left. While it is going to the right it is gathering momentum to go to the left. When it is going to the left it is gaining momentum to go to the right. Life moves between these two opposite banks; life is a river between these two shores.

If you have really gone deep into sadness, you are going to go into happiness as deep as your sadness was. People are miserable and people are not happy because they don't allow their misery. When they don't allow their misery they don't allow their happiness either. The swing is going to be proportionate – if it moves one mile towards sadness, it will move one mile towards happiness. It will be always in proportion; life goes on balancing. If you can go ten miles into sadness, you will go ten miles into happiness – exactly like that.

So live whatsoever is there, live it in totality. I am not saying in perfection, because these are two different things. When you live in totality, you don't have any ideal. When you start living perfectly, you have an ideal.

For example, if you are crying, to be total means cry your heart, the way it feels to you. But if you are a perfect one, you will look around – 'Who is the perfect crier? Whose crying is perfect? Who is the master of crying?' Find the master, learn from him the technique, and make him the ideal. How big the tears are which come to his eyes, and how they flow, and how he pours his heart, with what art and skill. So you learn the skill and the art, and you bring big tears to your eyes. That will be false. Perfection is always false – you are imitating. Because perfection has to have an ideal, and all ideals create imitators.

Totality is yours, perfection is borrowed – that's the basic difference. Perfection you learn from somebody else. If you want to become a perfect man, how will you become one? Buddha, Mahavir, Krishna, Christ, they become your ideals: Be like a Christ, then you are the perfect Christian. Be like Buddha, then you are a perfect Buddhist. But what can you do? If you want to be like a Buddha you will be just an imitation, you will be plastic; you will not be real and authentic. You cannot be a Buddha, a Buddha happens only once. Existence never repeats – existence always grows into new dimensions and new beings. You will be cheating yourself, and you will be cheating the world, and the existence will never forgive you for that.

You can only be yourself; that is the ideal of totality. If you have to follow somebody, you have to be like somebody else, then you are after perfection. 'Perfection' is a dirty word: drop it. That is one of the most dangerous words ever used by humanity. Drop it, be total.

Totality is not an ideal that somewhere in the future you can be here. While you are angry, be really angry – it is part of life. And out of anger comes compassion. When you are sexual, be really sexual – because out of sexuality arises the fragrance called BRAHMACHARYA, celibacy. But it is always out of the opposite.

You say: I GOT THE FEELING THAT I AM PERFECT AS I AM RIGHT NOW. No, you are not, and nobody ever is. Existence is never exhausted; potentiality is infinite. So when I say you are gods, what do I mean? I don't mean that you are perfect; even gods are not perfect – because gods are alive. What do I mean when I say you are gods? I mean your potential is infinite. 'God' means infinite potential – you can go on growing, and you can go on growing, and there is no end to it. Wherever you are, you can still go on growing.

Death never happens. That's what I mean when I say you are gods, I mean you are deathless. The Vedas say: AMRITASYA PUTRAH – YOU are the sons of immortality, deathlessness. You come out of nectar, you are made of the stuff of which nectar is made – AMRITASYA PUTRAH. YOU are sons of God, daughters of God – it simply means your potential is infinite, it can never be exhausted. Whatever you become, you will again find new doors opening, new peaks challenging, new adventures waiting for you, new dimensions calling you forth, invoking, provoking. One never comes to the dead end.

That's what I mean when I call you gods. God does not mean perfection, god simply means the energy that goes on moving. Each moment, you can be total. And from one totality you can slip into another totality; one totality helps you to be total in another moment. If you were angry totally, then you will be loving totally – the totality in anger helped you to be totally in love.

But you are incomplete; everything is incomplete. That's why things are growing, that's why there is so much evolution. God, to me, is an evolving concept. I am not talking about others' gods – they are dead things. If you ask a Hindu, he will say God is perfect. But perfect means dead. If you ask again, 'How long has he been perfect?' then they will be in difficulty. If they say he has been perfect always, then he is dead; he was never born. Then Nietzsche is right that God is dead. Perfect gods are dead gods.

God, to be at all, has to be as imperfect as you are. Then what is the difference between you and God? He is total and you are not total. He accepts his imperfections; you don't accept, you go on rejecting. That is the difference. The difference is not in perfection, the difference is in acceptance. You deny, you reject, you hide, you defend, you remain closed, you are afraid. You never go into anything really, you remain out of it – afraid, fearful, scared, ready to escape if sometimes things become too much. You go only so far.

The difference between you and God is only one: he goes UTTERLY into everything. When God dances, there is no dancer, there is only dance – he is so utterly in it. When God loves, there is no lover, there is only love he is so utterly in it. You are never total. Imperfect you are, imperfect is everything – these trees, these birds, these skies, everything is imperfect. But remember, by

'imperfection' I am not saying anything condemnatory, I am praising life. I am praising the very pulse of life.

Now you ask me: I THINK YOU ONCE SAID THAT WE ARE GODS BUT THAT WE JUST DON'T RECOGNIZE IT. PLEASE EXPLAIN THE COMPLETENESS OF OUR BEINGS. Again, you go on being neurotic. The perfectionist is a neurotic person. If you want to drop neurosis you will have to drop perfection – the very idea of perfection is madness-creating. And then you start feeling everything is okay as it is. And that does not mean that it is not going to change. Everything is changing, it is a flux. Nothing remains; except change, everything changes. So this moment one thing is right, another moment another thing is right, still another moment something else is right. Life goes on changing. And the person who has no ideals responds to life's changes, moment to moment, in totality.

Question 2

IS TRUTH A DISCOVERY OR AN INVENTION?

Neither.

Once, when commenting upon Isaac Newton's statement that 'the purpose of the scientist is to sail the oceans of the unknown, and discover the islands of truth,' Jerome Bruner impetuously burst forth with the claim: 'Nonsense – the purpose of the scientist is to sail the oceans of the unknown, and INVENT the islands of truth!'

The emphasis – Isaac Newton says 'to discover', and Jerome Bruner says, 'Nonsense. It is to invent.' And I would like to say to Bruner: Bruner, this is all just bullshit. The purpose of the scientist is to sail the oceans of the unknown and REDISCOVER the islands of truth. It is neither discovery nor invention.

Discovery means 'for the first time'. That is stupid. Eternity has been in the past – all the truths that we know again and again, are only rediscovered. They have been discovered many times; then we get fed-up, then we start forgetting a truth. It becomes too much, or boring – then we forget the truth. Then, after a few centuries, again we rediscover it. Truth is not something that is discovered for the first time; it is rediscovered again and again. Truth is eternal. We can move away from it – it is very natural for the human mind, it gets bored very soon. But once we have forgotten, the old again looks like new.

And this is what historians say too. For example, in this age, the truth of the atom is very important. It is one of the greatest discoveries – but it is not new. Democritus talks about it in 'Eunon', in Greek philosophy. Mahavira talks about it in India. Kanad, even before Mahavira, talked about it – so much that his name, his very name 'Kanad' means atom. He talked so much about the atoms that his name became Kanad – 'the atomist'. We have forgotten his real name, he talked so much about atoms. His whole philosophy is atomic.

Now again we will forget. After a few centuries, Einstein will be forgotten – as Kanad is forgotten, as Democritus is forgotten, as Mahavira is forgotten. Once we have forgotten, when we stumble upon the same truth again, we call it 'discovery'.

Isaac Newton is not right, truth is never a discovery. But Bruner is also not right, he says it is an invention. Truth is not an invention. I understand what Bruner means, he means that all truths are man-invented mind-constructs. We create them, they are not really there. We imagine them – it is imagination. He also has some point in it, because again and again we go on changing our truths. Truth cannot change, our imagination changes. When our imagination changes, we talk about another truth.

So all truths, according to Bruner, are inventions of the mind. But if the truth is an invention of the mind, then I would like to ask Bruner, 'What will you say about lies?' Then truth and lie will mean the same. A lie is an invention, an illusion is an invention – a mind-construct. A dream is an invention, a projection. Then what is the difference between a truth and a lie? According to Bruner, there will be no distinction; both are mind-constructs.

But there is a distinction. That's why I say truth is neither a discovery nor an invention, truth is a rediscovery. And truth is not a mind-construct – because only when mind ceases to function is there truth. That's why I don't call scientific truths 'truths'; they are only facts.

Only religious truths are real truths; they are not facts. Because the scientist never loses his mind. He works THROUGH the mind, he works AS the mind – it is the mind that is trying to find out. Religious truth is ultimate truth, pure truth – with no lies, with no mind involved in it. And the basis of all religion is to drop the mind. That's what meditation is all about – to put the mind aside, and then look. Look without the mind, look without this mechanism of the mind. Without the mind there can be no construct – because when the constructor is not there, there cannot be any construct. When the mind is not there, mind-constructs disappear. Look into things – but don't think, don't contemplate, don't bring thinking in. Just look.

Science discovers facts. Facts are millions – that's why, in science, truth is not singular, it is plural. There are truths, many truths. Biology has its own truths, and chemistry its own, and physics its own, and mathematics its own. – and so on, so forth. There are many truths, because there are many minds.

Religion talks about a single truth. It is not about truths – ONE. Because when the mind is dropped, you are no more separate from the universal, you are one with the universal. In that universal consciousness, in that cosmic expansion, whatsoever is known is truth. And it never never changes, it remains the same.

What Buddha discovered, that's exactly the same as what Jesus discovered later on – rediscovered. What Jesus rediscovered is the same as what Eckhart discovered – rediscovered. What Eckhart discovered is the same. Millions of saints have discovered it, all over the world – Buddhists and Muslims and Hindus and Christians and Jews, Sufis and Hassids and Zen people – they all have discovered the same thing again and again.

Each individual comes to it alone; again he discovers it. But what he discovers is the same cosmic consciousness, is the same satchitanand – bliss, truth, consciousness. It is the same – but when you start expressing it, when you start talking about it, it becomes different. Languages differ – Jesus speaks in Aramaic, Buddha speaks in Pali, Mahavira speaks in Prakrit, Hui-neng speaks in Chinese, Eckhart speaks in German, Rinzai speaks in Japanese, and so on and so forth. These are

differences of language. And all your so-called three hundred religions are nothing but differences of languages. They use different parables, naturally. They KNOW different parables, so they use different parables.

Buddha can't speak like a seer of the Upanishads – can't speak like that. He knows different parables, he knows different metaphors, which are closer to his heart. The Upanishads know a different kind of language, a different symbology.

Jesus has a different world of words. Jesus is a carpenter – he speaks like a carpenter, very down to earth. His words smell of the soil, of the wood, of the trees. Buddha can't speak like that, he is the son of a king. He has never known trees and the soil, he has never walked on the earth, he has lived in palaces. He talks in a different way, naturally – he has been brought up in a different way, he has a different imagery. He talks like a king – very cultured, very very sophisticated. Jesus is a plain man. Hence the appeal of Jesus is far more than of Buddha, because plain men are more in the world than kings.

Only a few people can understand Buddha; Jesus can be understood by any and everybody. The poorest man of the earth can understand Jesus, because Jesus speaks in the language of the poorest man. He talks also to the poor people – fishermen and farmers and prostitutes and labourers, he talks to these people. If he talks like Buddha they will not understand. And he cannot talk like a Buddha; he himself is a carpenter. The whole of his childhood he was working in his father's carpentry workshop – bringing logs, chopping wood, helping his father. He knows the smell of the wood. And a carpenter lives amidst fishers, farmers – those are the customers, he knows their language.

It is no accident that the whole world, particularly the world of the poor, has a great pull towards Jesus.

In India, Christians have not been able to convert brahmins. You cannot convert a brahmin; he speaks a totally different language. For him, Jesus looks not up to the mark – he knows the Vedas and the Upanishads and the Gita and the Dhammapada; he lives in a very sophisticated world of the mind. But Christians have been successful with the poor people – with the labourers, with the villagers, with the primitive aborigines, they have been successful. They immediately understand the language of Jesus. They may not understand Krishna, he talks about great philosophy. Jesus talks about very pragmatic facts.

These are the differences – otherwise they are talking about the same reality, they are talking about the same truth. So whenever one has attained, one comes to see, it is the same reality discovered again and again and again.

And each one has to discover it on his own. You cannot borrow it from somebody else. I cannot give it to you, I cannot transfer it to you. I can say how it feels, I can say how I arrived at it, I can talk about the path that leads to it. But you will have to go, and you will have to discover it. And when you discover it, your language will be different than mine. It is bound to be so – your language will be yours, it will have your signature on it. That's why there are so many religions. Basically religion is one. It cannot be two; it seeks and searches the one. It is not a discovery, as Newton says. It is not an invention, as Bruner says. It is rediscovery.

Question 3

SAYS A: IF YOU WANT TO KNOW YOURSELF, YOU NEED TO SIT STILL. BUT IF YOU WANT TO BE YOURSELF YOU HAVE TO MOVE. SAYS

B: IF SELF-KNOWLEDGE ENDS IN ENLIGHTENMENT, THEN ACTION MUST INVOLVE ENDARKENMENT.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, OSHO?

Self-knowledge has nothing to do with just sitting silently. And if you attain to self-knowledge just sitting silently – never moving, never active, never dynamic, never living – your self-knowledge will be a dead self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge has to be total. It has to be known while you are sitting silently, and it has to be known while you are in movement. It has to be known in inaction, it has to be known in action. The real man of self-knowledge is both together – simultaneously both. He is action plus inaction. That is the meaning of the Chinese word, WEI WU WEI. WEI means action, WU means no, WEI means action – action-no-action. WEI-WU-WEI: action-no-action.

This is the polarity: from action to no-action, from no-action to action. The man of self-knowledge moves to both the polarities, he is at ease with both. Sitting, he is in God. Walking, he is also in God. Not doing anything, he is in God. Doing a thousand and one things, he is in God. In the temple he is in God, in the marketplace he is in God.

But I can understand your question. It is one of the perennial questions, and has created much trouble. Because there are people who think if you are in the world you cannot know yourself, you cannot become enlightened. Leave the world, renounce the world, escape from the world – the world is a disturbance and a distraction. So go to the Himalayas, move to some caves deep in the Himalayas. Be there, alone – only then can you know God.

But this God will be very poor. And this knowing of God will be very very starved knowing, it will not be rich. Because when you are not active, there will be a dullness in your being, a deadness. Dust will settle in you. You will be like dormant water – stagnant, not moving; you will not be fresh like a river. Even if you are silent, even if you are peaceful, you will be dead. Yes, stars will be reflected in you, but you will not be going to the ocean. The river is more alive.

But I am not saying that people who are in the marketplace are going to know God just by being in the marketplace. Because if you are not silent within, the marketplace can become a madhouse – it does become.

There are two kinds of people – and they are not really enemies, they are of the same attitude. One believes that this is the only world, this is all that there is to life – so live it. Rush into ambition, desires, thoughts; do many things – achieve, attain, become. This man, by and by, drives himself mad.

Another man, seeing all this madness happening, escapes from the world, sits silently in a cave, becomes dormant, dull and dead. The man in the marketplace is alive, but he has no silence. And the man in the cave is silent, but he is no more alive. Both have missed.

That's why, for my sannyasins, I insist: Be alive and be silent, together. You will be richer. Be in the world and yet be not of it. Be a lotus flower – remain in the water but don't be touched by it. Then there is beauty and there is grace, and life enriches you. Because life is nothing but God, manifest in many many ways. Then life is no more taken as a distraction, but as an opportunity to grow, as a challenge.

Don't think of life as a distraction, but as a challenge. When somebody insults you, you can think he is disturbing you – that is one interpretation. Or you can think he is challenging you. Whether you are disturbed or not, it depends on you. If you are not disturbed, he has given you a great opportunity to grow. You will be thankful to him. You should go to him and say thank you, you should convey your thankfulness to him – because he insulted, and yet you were not distracted; something has become very, very solid in you, something has integrated.

A beautiful woman passes by, and there is no distraction – not that you avoid; not that you don't see her.

Just the other day, somebody sent a cutting from a London newspaper, that the leader of the Swami Narayan sect went to London.

For forty years he has not seen a woman. Even in the aeroplane he was curtained, and the air hostesses were warned not to go to him. Special arrangements were made so he could avoid women. Then at London airport he was driven from the aircraft in a closed car. In the airport a special curtained place was arranged to be there for him before he was cleared. And now in London he moves with his eyes focused on the ground. He could not even see the jubilee celebrations on the tv, because the Queen is not a king. So a special commentator... he was sitting in another room and a special commentator just commented to him, so he heard about it.

Now, this type of people – do you call them alive? And do you say of them that they have transcended sex? You cannot find more perversion; this is sheer perversion. This man needs to be psychoanalyzed, hospitalized – even electric shocks will be good. Now, this is absurd. And this man thinks that he is coming closer to God. To be so much afraid of women simply means you are afraid of your sexuality. Otherwise what can a woman do? What can a poor air hostess do? Why should you be so much afraid? The fear is indicative of repression.

And this type of man will be constantly thinking of women. He cannot think of God. He is not worried about God at all, he is worried about women. When will he find time to think about God? And even if he thinks about Ram, he will have to avoid Sita – and they both are standing together. If he thinks about Krishna he will have to avoid the gopis, because they are dancing around him. This man cannot enter the temple of Kali, because she is a woman.

How did this man manage to live in a mother's womb? Curtained?

This is sheer foolishness – but this foolishness has been thought of as a great religious quality. This is neurosis in the name of religion. No, if you have transcended your sexuality, you will by and by start forgetting who is a woman, who is a man.

Buddha was sitting under a tree meditating. A few people from the town had come with a prostitute for a picnic, and they all became drunk and they took away the clothes of the prostitute, and she

became afraid. They were much too drunk. Naked, she escaped. By the morning when the cool breeze started blowing, they became a little alert and they saw that the woman had escaped. So they started searching for her in the forest, and they came across Buddha sitting under a tree. So they thought, 'We should ask this man, he must have seen her – because this is the only way she can go, there is no other way.'

So they asked Buddha, 'Have you seen a beautiful woman, naked, passing by?'

Buddha said, 'You came a little late; you should have come ten years before.'

They thought this man mad. What is he talking about – 'ten years before'? They asked, 'What do you mean?'

He said, 'For ten years, I have lost all distinctions. Yes, somebody has passed – but whether she was a woman or a man... you are asking the wrong question to the wrong man. Yes, somebody has passed. I have heard somebody's footsteps, I have seen somebody passing. But to say whether she was a man or a woman is difficult, because I was not looking for a man or a woman.'

Unless you look for, how can you see? Have you not watched it happening to you some time? One day you are in the market, and somebody comes and says your house is on fire. And then you rush towards your house. A beautiful woman passes by – do you see? You look, certainly you look – but do you see? And if tomorrow somebody reminds you that a beautiful woman had passed, you will say, 'Forget all about it. My house was on fire – how could I see the beautiful woman? Maybe somebody passed, but I don't remember. It didn't make any impact on me, I was concentrated so much on my house.'

Another day, this same man will SEE the woman. And if she is beautiful, will see more alertly, more keenly, more closely. You see only that which you are LOOKING FOR.

Buddha said, 'Since ten years ago, I have stopped looking for women. I am not searching; they have disappeared from within me. In fact, I am no more a man.'

Strange words, but of tremendous truth. Buddha says, 'In fact, I am no more a man, because I am no more searching for a woman.' A man searches for a woman – that's what a man means. A woman searches for the man, that's what a woman means.

You cannot define a man as a man if he stops searching for the woman – he is no more a man. And Buddha says, 'I am no more a man. It is very difficult, sir, to tell you, but somebody has passed. You can go and inquire, somebody must have seen.' Now, this seems to be something valuable.

My whole approach is: You are to live in the world, but you have to live here with great awareness. Watch, see, live, go into everything. Don't deny anything and don't repress. Only by experiencing the whole of life, one goes beyond it. Only experience liberates.

So I am not for just sitting silently in a cave. And I am not for just getting involved in a thousand and one activities because you don't know how to sit silently. Yes, sometimes sit silently, and sometimes move into action. And by and by create a bridge between inaction and action.

And become so much in tune with your being that neither action nor inaction will make any difference to you. Acting, working, moving, flowing, you will still remain sitting silent. That's something worth attaining – when you are moving and nothing moves in you, when you are running and nothing runs in you, when you are talking and still you remain quite silent. When you do a thousand and one things and you are not a doer at all, then you have achieved the synthesis I call spirituality.

Otherwise, both kinds are 'endarkenment'; they are not enlightenment. One is endarkened by too much activity and occupation, another is endarkened by too much inactivity and unoccupation. Both miss.

Enlightenment is a great synthesis, a great harmony of the opposites. It is WEI-WU-WEI.

Question 4

OSHO, YOU DON'T ALLOW ME TO SETTLE ANYWHERE. BY THE TIME I FEEL SETTLED, YOU SAY SOMETHING WHICH UNSETTLES ME AGAIN. WHY DO YOU GO ON CREATING CONFUSION IN YOUR DISCIPLES?

The moment you start settling, you are becoming dead. You have to be unsettled. Settlement means you are stopping living. Settlement means you have become a householder, you are no more a sannyasin.

Never settle: be moving. Life should be a pilgrimage. Live in houses but don't become householders. Think about your houses as tents – any moment you can take them away from the earth and you can move. Remain moving, flowing, entering into the unknown.

Yes, that's what I do – the moment you start feeling settled, I unsettle you. That's what a master is needed for – to go on goading, to never allow you to settle. You would like to create some belief, some belief-system, and you would like to settle and be comfortable and forget all about journeys, inquiries, travels, unknown lands, uncharted seas – you would like to forget all that.

You want a small home, to settle with comfort, a cozy place to be in. This constant movement feels like inconvenience. You are searching for convenience, and I am trying to give you a journey. A journey is troublesome, pilgrimage is troublesome – but if you want to attain to truth you have to be a pilgrim.

That's why I go on unsettling you. I am not here to give you some belief-systems, I am here just to give you an urge to seek – just an urge to be an adventurous being, an urge to take the jump into the unknown.

And the moment it becomes known, drop it! It is finished! You have taken the juice out of it, now don't go on chewing dead bones. There is no juice in dead bones, there is no juice in dead beliefs. Whenever something keeps you going, it is alive: drink all the juice possible, drink to the full. And the moment you feel now it is dry, drop it: move.

There are millions of flowers; don't get attached to one flower. Remain a bee – remain a bee moving from one flower to another. Go on moving... every flower in this world carries honey for you. Why should you settle at all? Why are you in such a hurry to settle?

And confusion is the method to unsettle you. But one day, when you have been unsettled millions of times and confused millions of times, a new consciousness will arise in you – and even I will not be able to confuse you. That's what I am waiting for. The day I cannot confuse you, you have become ripe, mature – not that you have become settled. Confusion comes because you WANT to settle, because you start feeling settled, and then I unsettle you. Hence confusion. You say, 'Again. Again here we go. And just now I was feeling so cozy and I was feeling so good, and I was thinking that SATORI is very close... and it looks very far away.'

By the time you start feeling asleep... that's what you call 'settling'. I am not a lullaby, I am an alarm. Then you feel confused. You want to cling to the old, and I am destroying it, and I am giving you some new idea, some new path, some new urge. Now you are in difficulty. The confusion is, you want to cling to the old, I want to push you into the new. Hence the confusion. Once you stop clinging to the old, there will be no confusion. And then I will not be able to unsettle you at all. Because you are no more seeking settlement – how can I unsettle you?

Meditate on this small parable, a real story.

Ma Tsu heard of Ta Mei's stay on the mountain, and sent a monk to ask him this question....

Ma Tsu is a great Zen master, and Ta Mei is one of his disciples – he had thousands of disciples. The master sent some-body to ask the disciple some question – because he is staying on a mountain, alone, meditating, just sitting silently there. Now, the master must be feeling that he is getting settled or something. So he sends a person. He cannot go – he is very old, it will be difficult for him to climb the mountain – but he wants to see whether this Ta Mei can still be unsettled or not. He must be thinking to unsettle this Ta Mei, so...

Ma Tsu heard of Ta Mei's stay on the mountain and sent a monk to ask him this question: 'What did you obtain when you called on the great master Ma Tsu and what prompted you to stay here?'

Ta Mei replied, 'The great master told me that mind was Buddha and that is why I came to stay here.'

The monk said, 'The great master's Buddha Dharma is different now.'

Ta Mei asked, 'What is it now?'

The monk replied, 'He says it is neither mind nor Buddha.'

Ta Mei laughed and said, 'That old man is causing confusion in the minds of others and all this will have no end. Let him say that it is neither mind nor Buddha. As far as I am concerned, mind is Buddha.'

When the monk returned and reported the above dialogue to Ma Tsu, the latter was very happy and said, 'The plum is now ripe.'

'Ta Mei' in Chinese means 'big plum'. 'The plum is ripe now, I cannot unsettle him.' Now even the master cannot unsettle the disciple. The disciple has arrived; now he knows all the tricks of the old man.

If you get unsettled, this simply means you have not yet under-stood me. And I will go on unsettling you, till you understand. One day you will understand what I am doing here – destroying belief-systems, one by one. And not giving any belief-system to you instead as a supplement.

You are not much worried about destroying a belief-system – if you come as a Christian and I destroy your Christianity, you are not much worried. You would like to become a Rajneeshite – then it is okay. But when I start destroying that too, then you say, 'Now this is too much. Somehow I managed to come out of my Christianity and I was getting settled in this Rajneeshianity – and this man is now driving me out of that too. So where am I going to land?'

I don't want you to settle anywhere. The whole is your home – why choose small homes? Why create small gardens? The whole wilderness is yours, this wide world is yours, this whole belongs to you.

Don't become ever an 'ist', don't believe in any 'ism'. When you drop all 'isms,' truth comes to you – never before it. That price has to be paid.

Question 5

WHY IS IT SAID THAT LIFE IS STRANGER THAN FICTION?

Because it is. Fictions are by-products of life; how can they be MORE strange than life? Fictions are just shadows of life; how can they be more strange than life itself? Fictions are man-made, and life is God-made. Whatsoever man can do will have limitations; whatsoever God makes is unlimited, infinite.

Man can create a strange fiction, but he cannot create a real mystery. Even the strangest fiction that man can create will remain man's product. You can get intrigued with it once, or at the most twice, or, if you are very dull, at the most thrice. Even the dullest person cannot go to see the same movie a fourth time. Then it is no longer strange.

But life is like a Zen koan; it has no answer. It is a question-mark, and it remains a question-mark, and the more you inquire into it, the bigger becomes the question-mark. The more you know about it, the less you know. One day, when you have really known it, you declare your utter ignorance. That's what Socrates does when he says, 'I don't know a thing.' That's what the Upanishads say: 'The man who thinks he knows, does not know. And the man who says he does not know, he is the knower – follow him, go with him, keep track of him, don't allow him to escape. He has the key – the man who says, "I don't know."'

Why? What is the point of these declarations? The point is, when you really know life, suddenly it is revealed to you, that how can you know? Life is a mystery; it has no solution. And every day, in many ways, you come across this riddle. But because you have become a knowledgeable person you don't see those riddles. You keep on repeating some dull answers which are meaningless, pointless.

D. H. Lawrence was walking in a garden with a small boy, and the boy asked, 'Tell me, sir, why are the trees green?' Now, if there was some scientist, some foolish scientist, he would have said,

'Because of the chlorophyll,' or something like that. But Lawrence is not a scientist, and not a foolish man at all. He is one of the great mystics the West has produced, but is not KNOWN as a mystic. One of the great tantrikas the West has produced, but is not known as a tantrika.

If you were not a scientist, an ordinary person, you would have felt embarrassed. You would have answered something or other, or you would have forced the child to keep quiet. You would have said, 'When you grow up, you will know.' That's what fathers go on doing. Neither they know, nor their fathers nor their fathers' fathers – and they go on saying, 'When you become a grown-up person you will know. Don't disturb me.'

But D. H. Lawrence is an authentic man. He looked into the child's eyes and he said, 'They are green because they are green.' He is saying there is no answer. 'I am ignorant' he is saying – 'I am as ignorant as you are.'

And don't think for even a single moment that if you come across God and you ask him why the trees are green.... He will also shrug his shoulders, I tell you. He will not be able to answer you, because he is not a school master.

Once it happened, a great poet, Coleridge, wrote a small poem. A child from the neighbourhood came, because the poem was being taught in the school, and the teacher was finding difficulties in explaining it. So the teacher said to the child, 'You live just next door to this poet – you go to him. He must know what his poem means.'

And Coleridge looked into the child's eyes and said, 'Yes, when I wrote it, two persons knew what it means – but now only one knows.' The child said, 'Who is that one? That one must be you!' And the poet laughed, and he said, 'I am not that one. When I wrote this poem, I and God knew the meaning. Now only God knows.'

And I tell you not even God knows. Knowledge is so foolish, God cannot be thought of as knowledgeable. God is not a pundit, not a scholar, God is a lover. God himself is a poet. He sings a song, but you cannot expect him to know the meaning of it. He creates beautiful flowers, but you cannot expect to know the meaning of them. In fact there is no meaning.

Once you know the meaning of something then it is no more meaningful. Let me repeat it: Once you know the meaning of anything then it is no more meaningful, then it loses all meaning. The day you know what love is, love becomes meaningless. You can know the chemistry of the love – hormones and chemicals and this and that – and then love is finished.

Anything, the moment you know the meaning of it, becomes meaningless. God himself is the meaning, but he does not know what the meaning is. This is the mystery of life. You will come across it every day, if you are a little more sensitive. Knowledge makes people insensitive – knowledge makes them such dullards that they go on carrying in their heads much knowledge. And their knowledge is nothing but labelling.

There is a flower blooming, and somebody asks, 'What is it?' And you say, 'A rose.' And you think you have answered? Is this the answer? By calling it a name, by labelling a certain mystery in life, do you think you know? Just by saying it is a rose, what have you said? You have not said a single

word about the rose. The rose has no name, it is just a way of classifying it – utilitarian. But what do you mean by calling it a rose? You can call it by another name, and the rose will remain the rose. So the name is not the rose. Then what is it? Just by calling it a name, you are befooled. You think you know; you have labelled it. Labelling is not knowing – and your so-called science goes on just labelling.

If you go into the world of the scientist, his work is labelling. He goes on labelling. The more labels he puts on reality, the greater the scientist he becomes, the greater he becomes. And then we go on throwing those labels at children's heads, and tell them to cram them, so they become knowers.

A rose is such a great mystery. Tennyson has said, 'If I could understand a flower, root and all, I would have understood the whole existence.' Yes, in a small flower the whole existence is involved – by knowing a small flower, you will know the whole of it. Or, unless you know the whole of it, you cannot even know the part – the whole and part are so together.

That's why it is said that life is stranger than fiction. Life comes from God; the very source is mysterious. Life is a riddle, and a riddle with no solution. It is not like a riddle you find in your magazines or in your books – at the back of the book the answer is given. There is no back of this book. Mm? You can go on and on looking for the answer, but there is no written answer anywhere.

Listen to these few stories.

There's eight bubbleboys, with long hair, coming into a road-side cafe, and they see this fellow at a table. He's got a cup of coffee and a plate full of egg and bacon and sausages. Well, they go over to him, all eight of them, and just start messing him about. The first one pours coffee over his head, the second picks up his sausages with a fork and rams them in his eyes, the third one crashes the plate over his head, the fourth one shoves bacon in his ear, and the fifth one says, 'Oh, we'd better leave him now and get ourselves something to eat and drink.'

So they go over to the man that's serving and say, 'He isn't much of a man to stick up for himself, is he?'

And the man that's serving says, 'No, and he's not a very good driver either. He's just run over eight motorbikes.'

Life is more like fiction. Strange things happen in life.

There was once a man, and a woman who had a dog. They were travelling in the same compartment in the train. The man started to smoke and the dog began to cough. The lady said, 'If you don't stop smoking I'll throw your cigarette out of the window.' The man didn't stop smoking, so the lady took his cigarette and threw it out of the window. Then the man took out another cigarette and started smoking again. The dog began to cough again. The lady said, 'If you don't stop smoking I'll throw your cigarette out of the window again.'

So the man said, 'If you throw my cigarette out of the window again, I'll throw your dog out of the window too,' and carried on smoking. So the lady took his cigarette and threw it out of the window. The man took the dog and threw it out of the window.

When they reached the next station the dog was there waiting for the train. And what do you think it had in its mouth? The cigarette.

Or this third one.

Aunt Mildred decided to buy a parrot to keep her company. The local pet shop had a good selection, but one bird with bright green and blue feathers immediately caught her attention as the pick of the bunch. Curiously enough, the shopkeeper seemed reluctant to sell it.

'I don't think he's really Madam's sort of parrot,' he explained evasively.

'Why on earth not?'

'He doesn't come from a very nice home. Now, if Madam would care to step this way, I think I have just the bird....'

'But I don't like any of those, I want this one,' Mildred insisted.

'Very well, Madam.' Noting the glint of determination in Mildred's eye, the shopkeeper sold her the bird and an expensive wrought-iron cage to go with it.

Mildred installed the parrot in her sitting-room and waited breathlessly for his first words. The parrot flapped his wings, looked around the house, and said, 'New house. Very nice.' Mildred was delighted.

At half-past four Mildred's two teenage daughters came back from school. The parrot cocked an eye at them and said, 'New girls. Very nice.'

Mildred clapped her hands with joy. Not only was the parrot such a magnificent specimen, but he had perfect manners. No wonder the man at the pet store hadn't wanted to part with him!

At half-past five her husband Henry returned from the office. The parrot skittered to the front of his cage and said, 'New house. New girls. Same old customer. How are you, Henry?'

Life certainly is more strange than fictions.

Question 6

YOU SAY WE HAVE TO DROP ALL THE INNER VOICES WHICH OUR PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SOCIETY HAVE CREATED IN US. BUT NOW I SOMETIMES HAVE THE FEELING THAT YOUR WORDS ARE BECOMING SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN ME. HOW CAN I MANAGE THAT?

You will have to kill me too. That's what Zen masters mean when they say, 'If you come across Buddha in your meditations, kill him immediately.' It is not disrespectful about Buddha, it is simply a great love and respect for Buddha. It is great reverence.

But the disciple one day has to get free of the master too. The master can be used as a crutch in the beginning, but not for ever. You can use my words to drop other words, but my words are also

words, remember – one day you have to drop them too, otherwise nothing will happen. You dropped your father's word, your mother's word, and you replaced them with my word. But again you are caught in the word. You have changed your scripture, but the scripture remains. That is not going to help. A mind is needed where no word exists, no clinging with anything.

If you really love me, one day you have to do that ultimate act too: you have to kill me too. You have to drop me, you have to drop my word. And that does not mean disrespect, remember. In fact that is the ultimate in respect, because that is what I wanted you to do.

You have a thorn in your foot, you try to bring out that thorn with another thorn – you find another thorn in the garden and you pull out the first thorn with the second. But what are you going to do with the second thorn? It has helped; be thankful, be grateful – but throw it, don't start worshipping it.

Buddha used to say that a master is like a raft. You cross a river on the raft – then what do you do? You are grateful to the raft, but you don't carry the raft on your heads into the town. He said: Once it happened, four fools crossed a river on a raft. And on the other bank they were so grateful to the raft that they carried the raft on their heads into the marketplace. People inquired, 'What are you doing? Where are you taking this raft?' They said, 'Now we will carry it for our whole lives, because this is the raft that saved our lives. We would have been eaten by the wild animals if we had to stay on the other side – this raft carried us to this side. We are so grateful, how can we drop this raft? We will carry it our whole lives.'

Now this is foolish. This is not respect, this is simply stupidity. Buddha says when you have crossed the river, feel thankful, say a good thank you. Bow down, touch the feet of the master, and move on.

Question 7

THE OTHER DAY YOU WERE GIVING SUCH A BEAUTIFUL LECTURE ABOUT DREAMING. I WANTED SO MUCH TO LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND, BUT I HAD TO FIGHT TO KEEP MY EYES OPEN. FINALLY, I GAVE UP FIGHTING, LAY DOWN AND SLEPT FOR THE REST OF THE LECTURE. WHEN YOU SAID, 'THIS IS WHAT SATORI IS,' I WOKE UP WITH THE FEELING OF HAVING MISSED SOMETHING VERY ESSENTIAL.

THIS IS A VERY STUPID QUESTION BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PUT IT OTHERWISE. WOULD YOU PLEASE COMMENT ABOUT SLEEPING THROUGH LECTURES?

The question is from Anuprada. Anuprada, you can sleep. Everybody is allowed to do anything that feels like it is the right thing in this moment. If you feel like sleeping, fall asleep. Just one thing to remember: Don't snore – because that keeps other people awake.

Question 8

ISN'T IT THAT EVERY PIECE OF ART, AND ALL POETRY, ARISES OUT OF A CONTRADICTION, OUT OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN YES AND NO? DOESN'T THE END OF THIS FIGHT IN US MEAN SILENCE?

Not all poetry, not all painting, not all music, not all art, arises out of contradiction. But ninety-nine percent arises out of contradiction. That's why ninety-nine percent of art is a little pathological. Picasso is pathological, so is Vincent van Gogh. You will always find your poets, your painters, a little ill somewhat eccentric, bizarre, nuts.

Now psychologists say that if you get nuts to paint, that helps them to become normal. It has been tried all over the world – 'therapy through art' they call it. If a madman is given paints to paint with, by painting he throws his madness out. If he goes on painting, after a few weeks you will find he is turning to normal. Something has been catharted out of him through art.

Sigmund Freud had this attitude, that all art is pathology. Not all – I will not agree with him to that extent – but ninety-nine percent of it is. It is out of contradiction, it is out of conflict, friction. All great artists have suffered much. A Dostoevsky is a very ill person. Out of his illness, contradiction, out of his inner conflict, comes a great piece like BROTHERS KARAMAZOV.

So is Van Gogh very insane. But out of his insanity come great paintings. In fact, it may be that because he was painting it kept him closer to the normal. If he had not been allowed to paint he would have gone mad sooner. If Dostoevsky had not been allowed to write he might have committed suicide, he might have gone mad sooner. These are like vomits. And I am not saying that there is something condemnable in it, I am simply stating a fact: ninety-nine percent of art is pathology. So if man becomes healthy, if man becomes normal, if man becomes more meditative, this kind of art will disappear.

Hence there is a fear in the artists' minds that if people are REALLY meditative then what will happen to art? There will be no good poetry and there will be no good novels and there will be no good paintings and no good music. No, they need not be afraid – one percent of art does not come out of pathology, it comes out of silence. The Ajanta, the Ellora, Khajuraho, they come out of an inner meditative consciousness, they come out of meditation.

The great statues of Buddha have not come out of pathology, they have come out of a great inner experience. The great temples of the world, the great cathedrals of the world, have not come out of pathology. They are great aspirations, rising higher and higher towards the sky – towards the superconscious, towards God.

Jesus' sermons are not out of pathology – that is one percent. Freud will not count even that; he thinks even Jesus is neurotic. Freud will not count even Buddha – even Buddha's assertions are neurotic. That is going too far; in that way Freud himself proves to be neurotic. Then what about his own psychology? What about his own creation? It is a great work of art – what about it? Is it neurotic?

And if you ask me, I will count Freud and Adler and Jung in the ninety-nine percent.

But, one percent has happened, and that one percent can grow more. Yes, this kind of art will disappear, the Picasso type of art will disappear, if people are more meditative. But nothing is lost. More art of that one-percent quality will enter into the world.

What is the difference? How will you know the difference? If you stand before a Buddha-statue and meditate over it for half an hour, you will see the difference. And then go and meditate half an hour

on a Picasso painting, and you will see the difference immediately. Half an hour, and the painting will start driving you mad. You will feel very uneasy, you will start feeling very very restless. You cannot look at Picasso's painting for half an hour.

In fact Picasso never had any paintings in his own room – even his own paintings. Once it happened, somebody asked, 'All people who can afford to, have your paintings in their drawing-rooms, in their bedrooms – why don't you have?' He laughed. Jokingly he said, 'Because I can't afford to.' But that is not the real thing. To have a Picasso painting in your bedroom means sure nightmares – it is dangerous. And Picasso must know. He is already suffering from those paintings; now more of them are not needed.

A new kind of art will enter into the world if a great majority of people become meditative, that will have grace, silence, that will have the quality of something transcendental. Watching it, looking at it, you will start evaporating into the skies. It will bring you the message of God; it will bring you the message of your own infinite possibilities.

Go and see the Taj Mahal – that is of that quality. The beauty is not just in its architecture, the beauty is something transcen-dental. In a full-moon night, just sitting by the Taj Mahal, you are transported to another world. You will come back calmer, quieter; you will feel a tranquility arising in you. It is a music in marble, it is poetry in marble – and poetry of the quality of the Upanishads, Gita, Dhammapada, Sermon on the Mount, Tao Te Ching.

That one-percent art will grow, if you grow in silence. But the neurotic, the pathological art will disappear. And it is good that it disappears.

Question 9

WHAT IS A BASTARD?

Now this is a little bit too technical. And I wonder why somebody is so much concerned about this word 'bastard'. The question has come once in the past few days in another way; now it is here again. It seems that on somebody's conscience this word is sitting heavy – somebody is disturbed by this word.

But because you have asked, I will have to tell you a few things. Bastards come in all sizes and all shapes; basically they can be divided into three categories. First, a small anecdote, and then you will be able to understand them easily.

The excited couple had the county clerk rush filling in the marriage licences, and then they dashed over to the Justice of the Peace.

'I'm sorry,' said the Justice, when he looked at the licence, 'but it doesn't have the girl's name on it.' 'Can't you put it on?' asked the girl. 'No indeed,' said the Justice, 'you'll have to take it back to the county clerk.'

So they hurried back to the clerk, and when they returned to the Justice he looked at the licence again and said, 'There's no date on it.' 'But can't you....' 'Nope!'

So back to the clerk they went. Once more they appeared before the Justice, and this time he said, 'It doesn't have the county seal on it. And don't ask me to put the seal on. That's not my job. Take it back to the clerk.'

Thoroughly disgusted, the couple went back to the county clerk, and at last returned to the home of the Justice. 'Well, that's better,' said the Justice as he approved the licence. He then looked up and for the first time noticed a three-year-old boy with the couple.

'Whose boy is that?' he asked. 'Ours,' answered the girl. 'Yours? That means you had this child before you....'

'Yes,' said the boy's father. 'Before we were married.'

'Well, I suppose that's not my affair,' said the Justice, 'but I hope you realize that this boy is a technical bastard.'

'Isn't that strange,' retorted the young father. 'That's exactly what the county clerk said you were!'

So the first category is technical bastards. That means one is born only out of love, without any legal licence – one is born out of love without marriage. But that is not the worst kind. The worst kind is one who is born out of marriage without love. And that kind exists in millions; that is the major part of humanity.

That is the real bastard. This is just a technical bastard – a boy or a girl born out of sheer love. Nothing is wrong in it; it is just a technical question, nothing basically wrong. It is a perfect child; it is how it should be.

In a better world, these people will not be called bastards – because it depends on the way you look at things. These people will be respected more than the people who are born only out of licence, marriage, legality, otherwise there was no love. Without love conceived, without love born – they are the real bastards. And these real bastards go on calling the first category 'bastards'.

But even that is not the worst. The really real bastard is a third kind who is born neither out of love nor out of marriage, just accidental. These are the three basic categories. But why are you worried? If you are of the first kind, be perfectly happy.

I don't know why Jesus has not made a beatitude on bastards: 'Blessed are the bastards, because theirs is the kingdom of God, for they are born out of pure love.' Mm? he could have made this. 'Woe unto the real bastards! Because they are only born out of marriage, hence they will live in hell.'

And I don't know any other place where we can send the really real ones.

Don't be worried, don't take it seriously, don't let it crush you. Out of love, it's perfectly good – out of love is out of God. Marriage is a social invention, an institution. Sooner or later, marriage will disappear – SHOULD disappear. People should live in love. Why should people try to live in an institution? Why should people try to live in marriage? Marriage has been created because people are not responsible, marriage has been created because people are not loving. Marriage is a substitute – something is missing in people's real life, so marriage has been created.

Once you love a woman or a woman loves you, love is enough! Love will take care of itself. And if love cannot take care of itself, what else can take care? Then there is only a licence.

As I see it, out of a hundred marriages ninety-nine marriages are just licensed prostitution. They are not marriages. A marriage is only a real marriage when it grows out of love. Legal, illegal, does not matter. The real thing that matters is love. If love exists between two persons, it is blessed. If love does not exist between two persons, then all your laws put together cannot bridge them. Then they exist separate, then they exist apart, then they exist in conflict, then they exist always in war. And they create all kinds of trouble for each other. They are nasty to each other, nagging to each other, possessive of each other, violent, oppressive, dominating, dictatorial.

In a better world, with a better humanity, things will be different. In a better world, the child born out of love will not be called bastard; the child only born out of license, law, will be called bastard.

CHAPTER 9

Scratching the Shoe

29 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

A MASTER GOT UP TO ADDRESS A GROUP SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT AND HAD ONLY THIS TO SAY: 'HA! HA! HA! WHAT'S ALL THIS? GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL AND HAVE SOME TEA.' HE THEN GOT DOWN AND DEPARTED.

The only thing that can be said about the ultimate, categorically, is that nothing can be said about it. Even that is too much to say; even that is too much for language to express. That's why all the great scriptures are negative – they don't say what God is, they only say what God is not. By saying what God is not, they are not saying anything about God. They are simply saying something about that which is not God. And if you understand that, by and by your eyes will turn towards God. If you know the false as the false, then sooner or later you will stumble upon the real. To know the false as the false, is to know the real.

Buddha, Mahavira, Krishna, Christ – nobody says anything about the truth. They say what is NOT truth – they indicate the untrue, they acquaint you with the untrue. If that acquaintance goes deep in your heart, sooner or later you will be able to see the truth. Darkness can be expressed through language, light cannot be expressed. Hate can be expressed through language, love cannot be expressed.

Have you not observed it in your own life? If you are full of hatred, language is very potent. If you are full of hatred, suddenly language has a flow. People talk very animatedly when they are angry, in a rage – everybody becomes an orator when he is angry. Then he never gropes for words, then they simply come. Then all shyness disappears. But when you are in love, language looks almost impotent. Even to say 'I love you' looks so flat, pale, dead.

The wrong can be expressed by language, but the right cannot be expressed by language. That's why Lao Tzu says: That which can be said is already untruth. Because it can be said, or it has been said, it has become untrue. Truth cannot be said. Truth can be showed, but cannot be said. Fingers pointing to the moon – fingers don't say what the moon is, but they can show; they can direct your vision towards the moon.

Don't get caught by the fingers – that's what happens. And that is one of the revolutions Zen brings to the world. Zen burns scriptures – that is helping you to uncling from the fingers.

If I show you the moon, and indicate the moon with my finger, don't get attached to my finger – my finger is not the moon. And if you become too much obsessed with the finger you will miss the moon. To see the moon you will have to forget the finger; to see the moon you will have to completely drop the finger. You will have to take the indication and follow the indication – in that very following, the finger is forgotten. The finger does not matter. It may be a beautiful finger, the hand may be that of a great artist. It may be an ugly finger, it may be ill, it may be healthy, it may be black and white, it may be male, female – that doesn't matter.

The qualities of the finger do not matter; any finger can point towards the moon. But people have got too much attached to the fingers. Jainas are holding the finger of Mahavir – they worship that finger, they have forgotten the moon. And Buddhists are worshipping the finger of Buddha.

Exactly, there is a temple in Japan where Buddha's statue is not in the shrine but a finger, a marble finger, pointing somewhere into the unknown. Those who made that temple must have been very perceptive; but you don't know people – people are worshipping that finger. They go and put their flowers there and bow down. Nobody is bothered where the finger is pointing at.

Christians are holding another finger. And they go on arguing with each other – 'Whose finger is more beautiful? Is Jesus the greatest man? Or is Buddha the greatest man? Or is Krishna or Mohammed the greatest man?' What are you talking about? All nonsense! You are talking about the fingers, but fingers are not at all relevant. Any finger can point to the moon. And all fingers that point to the moon are alike – in pointing to the moon they are similar; all other attributes are meaningless.

Buddha speaks one language, Jesus speaks another, Mohammed still another. That doesn't matter. For a man who is perceptive the indication is enough. The man of perception will move towards the moon and forget all fingers. And the moment you move towards the moon, suddenly you realize all the fingers are pointing to the same goal.

So Zen is a finger raised in silence towards the moon. That's the way of all basic essential religion. Why is language so impotent? Why can't the truth be said? A few things have to be understood before we enter into this small anecdote.

Language simply misses it – for certain reasons in the very structure of language itself. First, language is utilitarian. It is good, as far as the world of utility is concerned. You go to the market to purchase something, language is needed – it makes things easier. Language is a lubricant, it helps communication – but only in the utilitarian world.

The moment you start moving towards existence... Existence has no utility, it is not something that you can buy or sell. Existence is non-utilitarian, existence is purposeless. Existence has to be observed with a deep silence in your eyes.

If you go to the marketplace and remain silent there, it will be very embarrassing to you and to others too. If you go to the police-station and they ask, 'What is your name 1' and you behave in a Zen way, you will be thought mad, crazy, cunning. Silence won't be understood in a police-station. And if you go and just stand in front of a shop without saying anything, the shopkeeper will not be able to understand your silence either.

In the ordinary world, language is needed – language has been invented for this ordinary world, this day-to-day world. But language is not for the eternal. There you don't purchase anything. There you are not talking to anybody in particular, you are simply in communion with existence itself. There is no need to talk; words are not needed at all. This is the first thing to be understood: language has certain utilities, and because of those utilities has certain limitations.

Existence does not understand your language. Language is human, existence is FAR wider – it is not confined to the human.

Just the other night, I was reading a book of a Russian existentialist, Nikolai Berdyaev. He is an existentialist, he comes very close to the Zen standpoint – but just close; he does not penetrate it totally. He says that in the old days mystics used to think that knowledge is divine. He feels that is inadequate, because knowledge, to be knowledge of the ultimate and the total, must be human too. Otherwise the human should be excluded from it. So how can knowledge be only divine? It should be human-divine – man should be included in it.

That's true – but there he stops. Why not include animals too? Why not include trees too? Why not include minerals too? They also exist; they cannot be excluded. Berdyaev says that knowledge, to be total, should be human-divine. I will say it should be mineral, vegetable, animal, human, divine – PLUS. If something is left, that has to be included in it too.

But language is human. No animal understands your language, trees don't bother about your language, rocks won't listen to your language – won't understand either. Even all human beings don't understand one language; there are thousands of languages on this small planet. So language is a human invention, very local. Existence is very big, huge; we are just small particles in it. This, our earth, is a very very small planet. Very small. Even our sun is a very small mediocre star. Bigger suns exist. Infinity surrounds us; we should not be very provincial.

That's what Zen means when it says language cannot express the truth. Language is a very provincial thing, local – an invention of humanity. If humanity disappears, all languages will disappear. Existence will continue. Existence was there before man entered, existence will be there if a third world war happens and man disappears and commits suicide. Trees will go on blooming, spring will come, flowers will bloom, birds will sing. The moon will be in the night, the sun will be in the morning. Nobody is going to miss you, remember; things will all be as they are. Man is so small....

But because we live in a human world, we live with people, we start thinking as if man is all. So language becomes very important. This you can watch. Have you ever seen Zen pictures? – you

will see it in Zen pictures too. When people look at a Zen painting they are always surprised, and a little restless, because they cannot see the point of it. If you see a Zen painting, the whole painting is not painted; the canvas is left empty – almost ninety percent empty. Just in a small corner below, there is a small painting. In that painting also, there are huge mountains, big trees, rivers – and man is very tiny like an ant. A small boat, and just a dot-like man is sitting there.

Western painting is different; man covers the whole canvas. Zen people laugh about it. They say, 'This is egoistic – you don't cover the whole canvas of life. This is out of proportion, you are making yourself too big. Where is the sky? Where is the vastness?' Western paintings are not representative of existence. Zen paintings are – that empty sky covers ninety percent, or even more. There are a few paintings in which it covers almost ninety-nine percent – just in a small corner below.... The painting seems to be more interested in the empty sky – as if the painting is there to show you the empty sky. And then clouds and then mountains and then rivers – and all in proportion – and then a tiny man.

This is the right picture. But we have tricks, so we go on magnifying ourselves, we go on painting ourselves big.

This happens every day. When you stand before your mirror in the bathroom, have you watched it? When you stand before your mirror, you cover the whole mirror; in a small frame, you are all there is. Looking in the mirror, you will be getting a wrong impression about yourself. Mirrors are great structures to create the ego – you feel as if you are the whole and all. In the mirror there is nothing else; only you are there. People love to stand before a mirror. The more egoistic a person, the more he loves to stand before a mirror. Mirrors are great flatterers, they flatter you. They make you look big – they help the mania of bigness.

That is not right. You should look at these trees standing there – before these trees we are very small. And then there are clouds, and before those clouds we are even more small. And then there is the empty sky and the stars, and infinity. Before that infinity we are simple dots.

Our language cannot express the whole. But our silence can – because when we are silent we fall in tune with existence. Hence, all religions preach for silence. When you are silent you are not a human being – you are as much a rock as a human being, as much a tree as a human being, as much an animal as a human being, as much a cloud. When you are silent you are in tune with existence. When you are not speaking you are no more part of the human province, the small locality of human beings. You become a member of the vast existence.

Silence is tremendous. Truth is known through silence. And when truth is known through silence, it can be expressed only through silence. If it is known through silence, how can it be expressed through noise? Language is noise. If it is known through silence, it has to be indicated in silence.

Language simply misses it. First, truth is so big, and language is so small. And then – it will look very paradoxical – truth is so subtle, and language is so gross. From both sides, language misses it. On one side, truth is so big and language is so small. On another plane, from another side, truth is so subtle and language is so gross. It is as if you throw a net in the river to catch fish. The fish is caught, but the water is not caught. When you withdraw the net you may get a few fish, but you don't get water – water escapes. Water is more subtle. Your net cannot catch water, it catches fish;

the bigger the better – smaller fish will escape out of it. And water is very very liquid and elusive – it escapes.

So, paradoxically, truth is infinite on one hand. On another hand, truth is subtlest, the smallest – the indivisible, the atomic. Again, language misses it. Language is a human invention. And truth is not a human invention. Language is man-made; language is just convenience. It is all make-believe.

You call a flower 'rose', in India we call it 'GULAB'. It does not matter. In six thousand languages, there are six thousand names for the rose. And the rose has no name; all names are inventions. You believe, it becomes a rose. You believe in another word, it becomes GULAB. But all words are just conveniences.

Truth is not a convenience. Convenience adjusts with you; with truth you have to adjust. Remember that difference. Convenience is for your use; truth you cannot use. If you want to move with truth, you have to move with truth – truth cannot move with you.

There are two kinds of people in the world. One, who wants truth to follow him. This man will never attain to truth. He thinks that truth should follow him, truth should become his shadow. This man is more interested in his own ego than truth. When this man fights and says, 'This is true,' he is not interested in truth. He is really saying, 'This is my truth – how DARE YOU say it is wrong!'

Watch it. If I say something against your truth you get angry. Not that you are getting angry because I am saying something against truth, no. It is YOUR truth; it hurts your ego. If something is said against YOUR truth, the hurt is in the ego – you don't bother about truth. Who cares about truth? 'My Christianity, my Hinduism, my Jainism, my Islam. My Koran, my Veda, my Gita, my Bible' – they hurt. The 'my' has to be looked into. You may not say it, but when you say, 'The Bible is true,' one thing is understood – that 'The Bible is my holy book.' That is not said so clearly, there is no need. Ego moves in very very cunning ways – it never comes on the surface, it remains hiding behind.

When people argue, they are not arguing for truth. Truth needs no argument – because truth cannot be decided by any argument or any discussion. No debate can be decisive; it is meaningless. When you argue, you argue for egos – your truth and somebody else's truth. Two egos are in conflict, you have to prove that you are right. Even if sometimes you have a glimpse that the other is saying the right thing, you cannot accept it. Many times it happens. You have a consciousness – many times a glimpse comes to you that maybe the other is right. But you cannot allow this, you cannot conceive of this – that will be very very bad for your ego. You have to fight for it.

I used to live in a town for a few years, and I had a neighbour – a very interesting man he was. He was a very very fanatic Hindu, and he would come and argue with me for hours. And I could see that he could see what I was saying, I could see that he had understood what I was saying – but still he would argue. Then one day I was surprised. He was talking to somebody else, and he was saying the things that I had been saying to him just that morning.

So I went into his house and I said, 'What are you doing?' He became very embarrassed. 'Just this morning, you were against the thing that you are saying now.' He was caught red-handed, he confessed. He said, 'This happens every day. When I listen to you I want to agree, but my ego resists. I cannot say yes to you in front of you. But when I come home and I think over it, I find you

are right. And you may be surprised, ' he said to me, 'that I have been arguing for you with many people. But I cannot say that to you. But today you have caught me red-handed – now it will be difficult to argue with you.'

And really, since that day, the argument ceased. He still used to come – now he would silently listen. A great realization happened to him, and the man changed since that day. Since that day, he became REALLY a seeker of truth. Then he was no more bothered by his ego – 'my belief' was no more the concern.

What is true? What is truth? Wherever it is, the real seeker is ready to go with it. These are the two kinds of man – one wants truth to follow him, and another is courageous and is ready to go with truth, wherever it leads. He has no conditions, he simply goes wholeheartedly with it. And unless you are so wholeheartedly with truth, so straight with truth, you will not be able to attain it.

Language is a human invention. Truth is not an invention, truth is a discovery – a rediscovery. Truth is already there. The word 'truth' is not there, just like the word 'rose' is not there. The rose is there, the word 'rose' is not there. Fire is there, the word 'fire' is not there. God is there, the word 'god' is not there – but people go on fighting whether to call him God or Allah or Ram. He has no name; truth is nameless. No linguistic label is needed, or, any label will do. If you need a label, then any will do – Allah will do as much as Ram will do, as God will do. Any name will do. If you know it, that God has no name, truth has no name – if that understanding persists in you – then any name is okay. Fire is fire. By whatsoever name it is called makes no difference.

Truth is there; language we have made. Silence you have not made – that is the beauty of silence. Silence is God-given, language is man-made. If you want to know God you will have to go through the God-given, you will have to follow him through his gift. His gift has something in it – a bridge. Through that bridge you can become reconnected with the divine.

Silence is golden, silence is precious. A single moment of silence is far more valuable than hours of thinking, studying.

Because language is a human invention, it is naturally dualistic. The human mind cannot see both the aspects of reality together; the human mind can see only one aspect at one time. Even about a very small thing: if I give you a small pebble, a very small pebble, you can keep it in your palm but you cannot see the whole pebble at one glance. You will be seeing only one aspect. When you turn it you will see the other aspect, but the first aspect will disappear. You cannot see even a small pebble in its totality. Its totality is an inference – first you see one part, then you see another part, and then you imagine its totality.

Just now you are facing me. You are seeing my face, but you are not seeing my back. When you see my back you will not be seeing my face. You can see a coin, you see one aspect at one time. Something is always missing.

And existence is multi-dimensional; there are many aspects to it. Not only multi-dimensional, existence is paradoxical. Day and night are together there – but when we see, we see day as separate, night as separate. Life and death are together there – but when we see, we see life as separate, death as separate. In fact we see them as enemies. They are not enemies – life moves into

death, death moves into life. They are like valleys and mountains – TOGETHER. Mountains cannot exist without valleys, valleys cannot exist without mountains. Wherever valleys are, mountains will be; wherever mountains are, valleys will be. They are together.

But the human mind always looks at one aspect – and when the paradoxical aspect asserts, it thinks it is against it. So day becomes against night, light becomes against darkness. Love becomes something against hate – they are not. Hate turns into love, love turns into hate – they are one wave, two expressions of one energy. And if you watch carefully, attentively, in silence, you will be able to see the fact. So clear it is! Can you hate a person without loving him? Can you make a person your enemy without first making him your friend? Impossible. First you have to make friendship, then you can create enmity. First you have to love, then you can hate.

That's why we hate those same people we love. The husband goes on hating the wife, and goes on loving. And the wife goes on hating the husband, and goes on loving. And sometimes you are puzzled – why? Why do you get so mad at your husband? Why do you get so angry with your wife? Why do you sometimes start thinking, 'Why not kill her?' And you know you love her too; you cannot live without her. Even if for a few days she goes some-where, you start missing her and you feel lonely and you feel sad. When the wife is away you hanker for her. When she is with you, you pray to God, 'When is she going somewhere? When will she leave me for a few days in peace and silence?'

Love and hate are involved in each other. In fact, to say that they are two is wrong. They are one. Friendship, enmity, are one.

Existence is multi-dimensional, paradoxical. But language cannot be paradoxical. If language is paradoxical it will lose its utility. If somebody asks something and you say, 'Yes-no,' then it is meaningless to say anything. Either you say yes, then it is meaningful, or you say no, then it is meaningful. But existence says yes-no together. There, yes and no are not separate; yes and no are two aspects of the same energy. That's why language is dualistic – it creates a kind of schizophrenia in human consciousness, it creates a split.

And existence is non-dual, existence is one. There is no split at all. It is very difficult for you to think that death is nothing but your life, the culmination of your life. You have been taught for centuries that death is the enemy – avoid, escape, protect yourself, defend yourself against it. It is not; it is the background of your life. If your life is lightning, then death is the dark cloud. Without the dark cloud the lightning will lose much – it will not shine any more. If your life is like stars twinkling in the night, then death is like the dark night, moonless night. The stars are there in the day too, but you cannot see them because without darkness they cannot be seen. They are together – one becomes the figure, the other becomes the background. When the other becomes the figure, the first becomes the background.

When you are alive, life is like a light on a dark cloud, a lamp in a dark night. When you become dead, then darkness becomes the figure and light moves into the background, it becomes your background. You go into rest; you go into deep rest. Death is rest for life. And out of death you will be born again and again. And out of life, death will happen again and again. They are together, a rhythm.

That's why language cannot express the one, the non-dual, ADVAITA – it cannot express it. Language is logical – has to be. If it is not logical, if it is illogical, it will be again meaningless.

Gurdjieff was sitting one day, and a journalist came to see him. And he was very averse to journalists. Suddenly he asked the woman who was sitting by his side, 'What day is today?' And the woman said, 'Saturday.' And Gurdjieff looked very puzzled, and he said, 'How can it be? Just the other day it was Friday – so how can it be Saturday today?'

The woman was also a little embarrassed – what is he saying? But she knew that he made very illogical statements sometimes. But the journalist thought he was mad. He was saying, 'How can today be Saturday when just the other day it was Friday? How? You tell me!'

The journalist thought it meaningless to talk to this man. He escaped, because he seemed to be mad and he seemed to be very ferocious too – he was a very strong Caucasian, a really strong man.... He escaped. When he escaped, Gurdjieff laughed. And the woman said, 'Why did you do this to him, that poor man?' He said, 'He would have taken unnecessary time and wasted my time. And all that I have to say is illogical. If he cannot tolerate this much illogic, then it is pointless – he will not understand what I am saying.'

Truth is illogical. Truth is super-logical – truth goes beyond the limits and confines of logic. Logic is clearcut. Logic is like an English garden – very clearcut, very symmetrical. One bush on this side, another exactly on the other side – very symmetrical. Lawn cut, hedges cut, everything clean, symmetrical.

Truth is more like a Zen garden... truth is more like my garden. Mukta is my gardener – she finds very many difficulties with my garden. She would like to make it clean, to put trees rightly in symmetry. She is a Greek. The Greek mind is basically logical – Aristotle and Plato and all. Now she is here in the hands of a man who is very illogical. I go on telling her, 'Put it anywhere, let it be a jungle.' In the beginning, she used to go into the garden when I was not looking, and she would start cutting and pruning trees. Now she has stopped; now I don't see her with her scissors, moving. Now she has become accustomed that this is going to be so.

There is a wild plant growing and spreading all over the garden. Nobody allows that plant, because it can destroy the whole garden. And I am in love with it. Mukta calls it 'the monster', she has named it 'the monster'.

Truth is more like a jungle. Not even a forest, because a forest is planted. A jungle is not planted, it is out of God – asymmetrical, no planning, no logic, no syllogism. It is simply there, with all its puzzles – you can be lost in it.

I have heard about a very great Zen master who was a lover of gardens. And a great gardener he was. The emperor was learning from him how to create a beautiful garden. And the emperor prepared the garden – three years he worked under the master, learned everything, and prepared the garden in the palace. He had one thousand gardeners to help and work for him.

After three years he asked the master to come and see. That was going to be the examination – if the master says, 'Good,' the emperor has passed. If the master says, 'No. You start studying

again,' then he would have to study again for three years. So much care was taken, everything was put absolutely right. And there was no trouble, because one thousand gardeners were working for months.

And then the day came, and the master came. And the emperor was very much afraid – and he took the master and he became even more afraid, because the master was looking very serious. And finally, it was a cool morning, but the emperor started perspiring – because the master had not even smiled; he had not said a single word.

And the emperor, full of fear, asked, 'Sir, why are you keeping so silent? Why don't you smile? Why don't you say something? Is there something basically wrong with the garden?'

He said, 'Yes, there is one thing basically wrong.' 'What is that?' the emperor asked. And the master said, 'Man is too much apparent here. God is absent. You have been too mathematical – you destroyed it. You have been too logical, the garden is too symmetrical. Everything is as should be. That's what is wrong. Nothing is wrong, that is the problem.'

So much of mathematics exists only in the human mind. God is not a mathematician. The Greeks used to say, in the academy of Plato, on the door it was written: 'God is a mathematician. Unless you know mathematics please don't enter into this academy.'

God is not a mathematician, God is very asymmetrical.

And then do you know what the master did? He went out, asked many gardeners to come out of the garden. They had thrown all the dry leaves outside the garden, and he said, 'Bring these leaves back.'

A garden without dry leaves is a dead garden. Dry leaves have to be there, they are part of it. As life cannot be without death, how can green leaves be without dry leaves? And the dry leaves fluttering in the wind on the ground create a music of their own that is as beautiful as the green leaves on the trees. Waving, dancing... and sometimes the dry leaves moving and dancing on the ground in the wind are more musical than any green leaves can ever be. Because the dry leaves are free. Green leaves are still in the world; the dry leaves are like Buddhas.

So he goes out, brings all kinds of dry leaves which have been thrown away, spreads them all over the garden. And comes wind, and those dry leaves start fluttering, and he smiles. He says, 'Now it looks a little more alive.'

This is the Zen attitude.

Language is very logical – has to be, by necessity. Truth is very illogical, very asymmetrical. It is not a syllogism, it is poetry. It is not arithmetical, it is a song. It is more like love than like logic – that's why language cannot express it.

Can you express your love in a syllogism? You will have to make something like this: you go to a woman and you say, 'Your nose is as it should be, your colour is good, your hair is perfect, your body is proportionate, your belly is not coming out – therefore I love you.' The woman will scream and call

the police – this is no way to fall in love. You don't fall in love with a syllogism; you don't come to a conclusion. Love is a jump, not a conclusion. When you make a syllogism you think of parts – the nose, the breast, the belly, the waist, the legs, the hands, the fingers, the hair, the colour, the teeth – you think of a thousand and one parts.

Logic can go only to the part. But where is the whole? Where IS THIS woman, this particular woman? She is not just her nose, she is not just her hair, she is not just her hands, legs. She is more than the sum total of her parts. You fall in love with that 'more'; you fall in love with the whole. And you love her nose because you love her; you love her first, then you love her nose – not the other way round. You love her first, that's why you love her teeth – not the other way round.

Logic goes through the part, love goes through the whole. Truth is more like love – it is an insight into the whole. That whole is called God. Or truth, or tao.

Language is linear, it moves in a straight line. Nothing moves in life in straight lines; life moves in circles. The earth moves in a circle around the sun, and the earth moves on its own hub in a circle. And the seasons move in a circle, and the stars move in a circle, and life moves in a circle. – everything moves in a circle. Only logic, language, move in a line.

Language is linear, and existence is non-linear. Existence is circular. You cannot express the circle through the line. The line goes straight; the circle has a line in it but it is curved, it is never straight. If you listen to life, the straight line is an invention of geometry. Straight lines don't exist. Euclid says straight lines exist, but now a new geometry has come into existence: non-Euclidean geometry. It says there are no straight lines, straight lines are not there at all.

How can you draw a straight line? If you draw a straight line, sitting here on the floor, it will not be straight – because the earth is round. So if you go on drawing that line, go on drawing, one day you will find it has become a circle. So when it was small it looked straight but it was not, it was part of a great circle – it was an arc. You misunderstood it – go on making it bigger and bigger and bigger, and one day you will see it has become a circle. Every line turns into a circle finally – so every line is part of a circle. But the circular logic is very different from the linear logic. The linear logic goes on progressing, goes on progressing. It goes on evolving; it knows no involution.

That's why, in the West, Western religions have the concept of creation, but they don't have any concept of destruction. Their God only creates – and then? then is hooked. Then it goes on and on. This is absolutely false, because nothing can go on for ever; some day it has to come to rest.

In the East, God creates and God destroys. One day the world comes into existence, one day it disappears again. This whole experience of millions of millions of years is called one day of God – 'Brahma's day'. And he is both the creator and the destroyer. Now, the Western mind cannot think that God can be the destroyer; that is very logical – the creator cannot be the destroyer.

But in the East we know far deeper, we have an intuitive feeling for the whole. yes, the creator has to be the destroyer too – otherwise there will not be any death, there will be only life. And there will be no hate, there will be only love. And there will be no sadness, there will be always happiness. It is not so. Everything born dies.

So this whole existence is born one day, and one day dies. Only in the East do we have the conception – with evolution, we have the concept of involution. All is not going on, always progressing – with progress there is a regress too. And you can watch and see it: in one thing you progress, in another thing you regress. When a man becomes very rich, inside he becomes very poor. When a man has all, inside he starts feeling he has nothing. So progress and regress go on hand in hand. When a man renounces all, suddenly he feels he has become a master of his own being. The beggar becomes the emperor, the emperor becomes the beggar.

Life is very paradoxical – it is not linear, it is not logical. And because of the language and its line-structure, time is created: past, present, future. In fact, there is no past and no future, there is only present. It is all eternity. Existence has no past and existence has no future. Existence lives in eternity; it is always NOW.

So how can that 'now' be expressed? Impossible – because our language carries the idea of past and present. Our language is created by our memory, it is committed to the memory. Because it is committed to the memory it thinks about the past – memory has the past. And because it thinks of the past, it thinks of the future too – the future is nothing but the projection of the past again. And between the past and the future it goes on missing the present, which is the ONLY reality.

God is present. You cannot say 'God was' – that will be stupid. And you cannot say 'God will be' – that will be stupid again. You can only say 'God is'. God always IS – there is no 'was' and no 'will be'. God is.

This is-ness is called by the Zen people 'TATHATA' – suchness. This suchness cannot be expressed by language. Language will destroy this suchness – it will divide into past, present and future. And immediately things disappear – the moment you divide the wholeness of a thing, you destroy it.

I can show you a beautiful rose, you can take the petals off to look inside it – what makes it tick? But then you have destroyed the flower. You can go to a chemist, you can find all the chemicals that make the flower, you can find how and why it smells, what makes this beautiful rose-smell come. You can find why it is red or why it is yellow or why it is black; you can find all the constituents. But you will not find one thing which was the most significant: you will not find beauty. You can put all those chemicals in different bottles – labelled, measured, classified – but one bottle will remain empty, the bottle that is labelled 'beauty'. Beauty you will not find. Beauty is only of the whole. So is truth only of the whole.

Language is linear, and truth is simultaneous. It is as if you are here, the trees are here, the birds are here, the clouds are here, the stars are here – everything is existing in this moment. It is not that first you exist, then trees exist, then clouds, then stars. Everything is existing simultaneously. But if you have to make an essay, things cannot exist simultaneously. First you talk about people who are gathered here, then you talk about the trees, then you talk about the clouds, then you talk about the stars, farther away stars – by and by you talk, gradually you talk, you put everything in line. Then things exist first, second, third – a queue starts coming into existence.

Existence is not standing in a queue, existence is all together. That's why it cannot be expressed in language.

Finally, language is an echo, a reflection in the mirror, a shadow. How can it express the truth? Language is like the menu – you can read the menu, but the menu is not the food. You can read the menu but you cannot eat the menu. The menu can do one thing, it may give you appetite – but it cannot satisfy your appetite.

The words of a master can give you an appetite for God, but they cannot satisfy the hunger for God. The scriptures may provoke a desire in you, but they cannot fulfill the desire. Words can challenge you, but that's all – because a word is a shadow. The word 'fire' is not fire, the word 'food' is not food. So it is with the word 'god' – the word 'god' is not God.

That's why Zen masters try to find out non-linguistic ways. Sometimes a Zen master will shout. He will say a meaningless thing, just a shout, meaning nothing, a meaningless sound. Or sometimes he will laugh: Ha ha ha! Or sometimes he will cry, and tears will fill his eyes and will start rolling down his cheeks. Or sometimes he will remain silent and will not do anything. Or sometimes he will beat the disciple, hit the disciple, throw the disciple.

Zen masters try to find out a non-linguistic way to provoke you, to bring you to this reality that is surrounding you. But you are lost in your head. So many clouds of language and words and philosophies go round and round inside your head that you have become very very dull. Somebody needs to shout at you. Somebody needs to hit you hard, so at least for a single moment you come to wakefulness.

A few things. Zen masters say: 'The use of words is like striking out at the moon with a stick or scratching one's shoe because one's foot itches.' That I like. Mm? Go on scratching your shoe because your foot is itching. That is not going to help. That's what we are doing, scratching the shoe. Something else is itching. We have to go direct to reality. Even this small layer of the shoe is enough to prevent you. And language is a BIG layer.

EVERY NIGHT THE MOON'S
REFLECTION IS IN THE STREAM
BUT IF YOU TRY TO FIND THE SPOT
WHERE IT TOUCHES THE WATER
YOU CANNOT FIND EVEN A SHADOW.

These words are from a Zen master, Takuan. He says so it is with language – you can go on listening and listening and listening, and when you try to find out where the word touched you, you will not even find a shadow. Something else, something more immediate, something more down-to-earth, is needed.

It happened, a very beautiful anecdote in the life of a great Zen master, Rinzai:

Rinzai met a party of three travelling monks belonging to another Buddhist school, and one of the three ventured to question the Zen monk: 'How deep is the river of Zen?' The reference to the river

arose from their encounter taking place on a bridge. The Zen monk, Rinzai, who was noted for his direct actions, lost no time in replying. 'Find out for yourself,' he said, and offered to throw the questioner from the bridge into the river.

The questioner has asked, 'How deep is the river of Zen?' A beautiful question. But when you ask a question of a Zen master you have to be ready for anything. Because a Zen master does not reply from his memory; just the immediate response is his response. They were standing on a bridge, that's why the question arose. Maybe because of the river the questioner used the metaphor of the river. But he must be unaware that Zen masters don't like metaphors, they like reality. The metaphor will function like a shoe – and the reality is your foot which is itching.

Rinzai said, 'Find out for yourself,' and offered to throw the questioner from the bridge.

Even Doctor Suzuki, who has introduced Zen to the West, who has done a great service to humanity – in these seventy years, no other man has done such a great service to humanity as Suzuki – but even a man like Suzuki comments on this story: 'But fortunately his own two friends interceded and pleaded for mercy, which saved the situation.'

Now even Suzuki has become afraid; this is going too far. But my own feeling is, this is not fortunate that the two interceded. It would have been perfectly good to throw the monk into the river – to give him a taste of the REAL river, rather than going on thinking in metaphors. Thinking in metaphors does not help.

I am not ready to agree with Suzuki. I have a very soft heart for Suzuki, but I am not ready to agree with this statement. He says it was fortunate that the other two interceded and saved the situation. They destroyed the whole situation. Nobody knows – the man falling from the bridge into the river might have become enlightened. Because when a man like Rinzai offers to throw a man, it cannot be meaningless. A man like Rinzai knows what he is doing; a man like Rinzai is perfectly aware of the situation.

There are people who can become alert only when death faces them – otherwise they are never alert. There are people who will wake only when death is standing just in front of them. For me, it was unfortunate that the other two interceded and pleaded for mercy. The poor man missed a great opportunity. Satori was possible. In fact, a man like Rinzai will not offer to throw anybody or everybody. A man like Rinzai will offer to throw somebody only when he sees the possibility, when he sees the potential.

This is the way Zen tackles situations, questions, challenges. Another anecdote.

A monk had just returned from a very long trip, only to learn that his little son had died – and that even now, the funeral was passing through the village. The shock and pain of this discovery sent him dashing towards the village waving a sword. He came upon the little procession with the master walking alongside the coffin.

The monk raised his sword to the master and cried, 'Now can you say a word?'

Now, this is a very special way of Zen people. They say, 'Now can you say a word? which can solve the problem that is encountered by me? My son is dead, and I loved him tremendously. Now can

you say a word to solve this problem?' And he has come with a sword, and he raises the sword in front of the master. And he says, 'Now can you say a word? Can you say something that can help me to see into this problem, to go through this problem, to have a breakthrough?'

The master lifted the lid of the coffin and said, 'You see, I have kept nothing from you – not even this.'

A great master. Opened the lid of the coffin and said, 'Come on! You see?' The dead body of the son. Death – so young, so fresh. Death so alive. Because when a child dies, death is very young and very fresh. Very radiant. You can see death in the child's face more than you will ever be able to see it in an old man. When an old man dies, death is also old. When a young child dies, death is very young and fresh like a flower.

The master opens the lid and says, 'You see, I have kept nothing from you, not even this! I have talked about life, I have helped you to see life. Now see death too. Not even this – I have not kept anything hidden from you. No, everything is revealed. Life you know – now see death too.'

'It is so, it is so,' replied the monk, as pain revealed what had so long been hidden from him.

What has been hidden? What has pain revealed? What did this master do by opening the coffin and showing the man his own dead child? What has he done?

The man was angry; he was ready to kill or be killed. He was in a rage, he was mad, he was waving a naked sword. He must have been very much attached to the child; the child must have been his very life. He is not in his senses. But the cool face of death brings him back to his senses, and he can see his attachment. And he can see that he is not worried about the child and the child's death – he is worried about his own attachment, about his own possessiveness. He is worried basically about his own death. The child has shown that everybody is going to die. The child has shown that you are ready to die any moment – even a young boy can disappear into death, so what about you?

All these things are revealed in that fresh, silent, cool death. Life is warm, death is cool. But death is as much alive as life.

And the master says, 'You see, I have kept nothing from you – not even this.' And a great realization, a great awakening: 'It is so, it is so,' replied the monk, as pain revealed what had so long been hidden from him.

Zen masters are very straight, very immediate. Nobody can predict their response, because they never react. Now, this is not a reaction, it is not a prepared answer. The situation is so new, it may not have ever happened before, and it may not have ever happened afterwards. Nothing repeats. If you are really alive, responsive, spontaneous, nothing repeats. Every situation brings its own answer.

This is not a rehearsed answer. He opens the lid – this is a total act of responsibility.

Listen to this, another anecdote – very rare.

Some unexpected visitors arrived at the monastery, so word was sent to the cook to prepare extra food.... And the cook was no ordinary man; he was a man who had attained his satori....

Quickly he set about his task, but in gathering up sticks of green vegetables in a hurry he also picked up a snake. And it was getting dark, and the monk was old, and he could not see well either, and he was in a hurry. The guests had come, and immediately something was to be prepared. So he was cutting vegetables, and in the vegetables he picked up a snake too.

Chop-chop-chop went the knife, leaving the cook all unaware of the extra protein going into the pot. Halfway through the meal, the cook was brought before the master, who pointed to the head of a snake held between his fingers.

By accident the head had come into the master's vegetables. And the master called the cook and pointed to the head of a snake held between his fingers. What is the master saying? He is saying, 'Now can you say a word?'

Quick as a flash, the cook deftly removed the snake's head from the master's hand and swallowed it, saying, 'Oh, thank you, Master,' and briskly left the room.

This is a Zen response. What is there to say? Must have been a rare man, this cook. What a beautiful response! This is a total response – straightforward, immediate. And whenever you are straightforward, your answer is not just an answer, it is your totality – the action is total.

Now not a single moment's hesitation, not a single moment's doubt, not a single moment's guilt. No apology, nothing. And it happened in a single moment, in a split moment – because if you waver a little, thought enters and the answer is no more a response. Because through thought comes the past, memory. You start looking – 'What to do? What should I say?' The moment you think 'What should I say?' you have missed. He would have been beaten that day, badly beaten. He might have even been thrown out of the ashram.

But this beautiful act, this total act – he immediately took the snake, swallowed it, and said, 'Thank you, Master.' As if something has been offered to him. This is the Zen way of responding.

Now today's sutra.

A MASTER GOT UP TO ADDRESS

A GROUP SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT

AND HAD ONLY THIS TO SAY:

'HA! HA! HA! WHAT'S ALL THIS?

GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL AND HAVE SOME TEA.'

HE THEN GOT DOWN AND DEPARTED.

Very small, but very penetrating. Very sharp like a naked sword – it can cut you to your very core.

A MASTER GOT UP TO ADDRESS... In Zen, 'address' means provocation, 'address' means challenge. 'Address' means calling you forth out of your sleep.

'Address' means exactly what Jesus did when Lazarus died. He had gone far away; the sisters of Lazarus sent a messenger. And Jesus comes rushing to the village – but still, when he comes, three days have already passed. Lazarus' body has already started stinking. But they have preserved the body in a cave; they are waiting for Jesus. Hope is no more there – how can a three days' dead body be called forth again to life? And they start crying when Jesus comes, and they say, 'Master, you have come too late.' And Lazarus was one of Jesus' very beloved disciples.

Jesus said, 'Don't cry. Just come with me, follow me.' And they go to the cave, and outside the cave stands Jesus, and he says, 'Lazarus! Come out!' Nobody believes that anybody is going to come out. But nobody can believe their eyes, because they see Lazarus coming out – stumbling a little, wavering a little, like somebody who has been in a deep coma.

This is address: 'Lazarus, come out!' A call, a provocation, a challenge.

A MASTER GOT UP TO ADDRESS A GROUP SEEKING ENLIGHTENMENT... And those who are in search of enlightenment, what is there to say to them? Nothing can be said about enlightenment. You can be provoked to become enlightened, you can be pushed, you can be thrown into it – but what can be said about it? There is nothing to say.

... AND HAD ONLY THIS TO SAY... but this small gesture – it is a gesture: 'HA! HA! HA! WHAT'S ALL THIS? GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL AND HAVE SOME TEA.' What is he saying? What is he indicating? What is he saying without saying?

Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the greatest philosophers of the modern age, has said... he was very much impressed by Zen, and many of his statements are Zen-like, they have the quality of Zen. One of the most important statements that he has made, and it is very significant to come out of a Western philosopher's mouth, is in his book *TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS* where he says: 'That which cannot be said should not even be tried.'

That which cannot be said should not be said at all. One should keep silent. That's what this master is doing – without saying anything he is making a gesture. First he says, 'Ha! ha! ha!' – he laughs, a belly laughter. It must have been a shock for those who had come to seek enlightenment. You don't expect that, that you will be taken so non-seriously.

Enlightenment-seekers are very serious people, long-faced people. And here comes this man, stands there on the stage and says, 'Ha! ha! ha!' What kind of sermon is this? But it is a Zen sermon. He laughs at the absurdity that you are trying to seek enlightenment. It cannot be sought – that's what he is saying. He is ridiculing them. He is saying, 'You are ridiculous! Ha! ha! ha! You are foolish, you are stupid. Enlightenment cannot be sought; it is not something that you can seek and find. It is not something that can be achieved, attained. It is there already. All that is needed is to drop your seriousness. Laugh a little.'

Drop your seriousness, drop this dullness. And drop this seeking mind – the seeking mind HAS to be serious, because your hope is in the future: some day when you have attained, then you will laugh. And the master says, 'Don't wait! You can laugh right now!'

Enlightenment is not something that is in the future, it is already there inside you, bubbling – wants to surface, wants to bloom, but because you are so much concerned with search and so much occupied with search, you don't look within. It is there, and you go on rushing outside. That is the meaning of 'Ha! ha! ha!'

If you understand why he is ridiculing... people who have come in religious search, why is he laughing at them? Why is he trying to make them feel foolish? They are foolish! God cannot be sought, God is here. Because you seek, that's why you miss. Drop all seeking, drop all desire, drop all future, drop all hope – and suddenly you are not there. only God is.

You exist in your seeking; the achiever's mind is the ego. You want money, you want meditation, you want power, one day you want paradise – but you want something. Your wanting never stops. This enlightenment, and the search for it, is again a new object for desire. Hence the laughter – the master simply laughs in their faces, to make them alert: 'Don't be ridiculous.'

If you go to a Zen master and ask: 'I want to know God' he may hit you. He may say, 'What kind of foolish question are you asking? You ARE a god! And how can a god try to be a god?' It is as if a mango asks, 'How can I become a mango?' Or the cypress tree in the courtyard asks, 'How can I become a cypress?' What will you say? You will say, 'Ha! ha! ha! You are a cypress already! What's all this?' The master says: What are you searching? What is all this nonsense? Stop searching, and find. Seek not and find.

There is a statement of Picasso – very beautiful. He says, 'I seek not, I find.'

'GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL...' This is very symbolic. This search, this seeking to attain something, is again an ego-search. ego-effort, to come into the front. You want to have the biggest bank-balance in the world; you want to stand in front, you want to be the first in the world. You want to become a president, you want to become a prime minister, you want this and that – but the basic search is: you want to keep others at your back, you want to be in the front. You want to be the first man in the world – the most beautiful, the most powerful, the most rich, the most knowledgeable. And one day you find this is not possible. Then you think, 'Now I should become a Buddha – the most enlightened.'

But again it is the same mad mind, creating new desires and new dreams.

And the master says, 'GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL' What is he saying? He is saying: Forget all this effort to be in front. Move towards the back.

That's what Jesus says: 'Those who are first in this world will be the last in my kingdom of God. And those who are the last will be the first.'

The master says, 'GO TO THE BACK OF THE HALL AND HAVE SOME TEA!' Tea is symbolic – tea is a metaphor in Zen. Tea has become a great metaphor in Zen because tea brings awareness. If you drink too much tea you cannot sleep. If you are feeling sleepy you drink a cup of tea and the sleep leaves you. Hence, tea has become a symbol. And the master says: Go to the back, and have some tea! Just stand at the back, be the last in the world, and become aware! And then you will join with me in my 'Ha! ha! ha!' You will laugh at the whole absurdity. You were missing because you were seeking; you were missing because you were trying to get it.

The moment you stop desiring, it is there. But sometimes you stop desiring and it is not there. For example, in deep sleep – you desire no more, but it is not there. You need a cup of tea. In deep sleep you don't desire, you don't think of money – not even dreams are there. All has stopped, the mind has halted, but still you don't attain Buddhahood. Why? In deep sleep you become a Buddha every night. But you miss, because at that time you are not aware.

So go to the back, and have a cup of tea. And don't ask what enlightenment is, and don't ask how to attain it, and don't ask for the methods and the technology and the philosophy.

'WHAT'S ALL THIS?' The master says it is all nonsense. Saying this, HE THEN GOT DOWN AND DEPARTED. His sermon is finished. The shortest sermon – but one of the most penetrating.

Now don't start thinking about it! Now don't start thinking about it, otherwise you will miss the message. Go to the back, and have a cup of tea.

CHAPTER 10

The Bridge but not the Water Flows

30 June 1977 am in Buddha Hall

Question 1

UNTIL THE JEWS AND ARABS AND OTHER TRIBES BROUGHT THEIR RACIALLY EXCLUSIVE AND JEALOUS GOD TO THE WEST, TOAMY, BACCHUS, MITHROS AND APOLLO WERE THE GODS THAT MAN WORSHIPPED. DIANA HAD HER BOW AND ARROW, THOR WAS IN THE NORTH, THE MOTHER GODDESS WAS WORSHIPPED IN THE WEST. AND THEN DEATH AND RESURRECTION BECAME THE RELIGION OF THE WEST. GUILT AND SIN WERE TAUGHT. WHY IS ADAM A SINNER? WHY ISN'T HE LIKE THESEUS OR JASON OR HERMES? IS THE CONCEPT OF SIN JUST A TRICK? TO MAKE MEN MEDITATE?

The question is from Anand Mohammed.

I am a pagan. There is no god for me, except this existence. God is intrinsic to life; God is not outside life. God is this very life. To live this life totally, is to live a divine life. To live this life partially, is to live an undivine life. To be partial is to be irreligious. To be total and whole is to be holy.

The questioner asks about the past. In the past, all over the world, people were pagans – simple nature-worshippers. There was no concept of sin, there was no question of guilt. Life was accepted as it is. There was no evaluation, no interpretation – reason had not interfered yet.

The moment reason starts interfering, condemnation comes. The moment reason enters in, division, split, starts and man becomes schizophrenic. Then you start condemning something in your being – one part becomes higher, another part becomes lower, and you lose balance.

But this had to happen; reason had to come, this is part of growth. As it happens to every child, it had to happen to the whole of humanity too. When the child is born he is a pagan; each child is a born pagan. He is happy the way he is. He has no idea what is right and what is wrong; he has no ideals. He has no criteria, he has no judgement. Hungry, he asks for food. Sleepy, he falls asleep. That's what Zen masters say is the uttermost in religion – when hungry eat, when feeling sleepy go to sleep. Let life flow; don't interfere.

Each child is born as a pagan, but sooner or later he will lose that simplicity. That is part; that HAS to happen, that is part of our growth, maturity, destiny. The child has to lose it and find it again. When the child loses it he becomes the ordinary man, the worldly man. When he regains it he becomes religious.

The child's innocence is very cheap; it is a gift from God. He has not earned it: he will have to lose it. Only by losing it will he become aware of what he has lost. Then he will start searching for it. And only when he searches for it, and EARNS it, achieves it, becomes it – then he will know the tremendous preciousness of it.

What happens to a saint? He becomes a child again; nothing else happens to a saint. He is again innocent. He went into the world of reason, division, ego, a thousand and one ideals; he became almost mad with evaluation. And then one day, finding it all just absurd, stupid, he drops it. But this second childhood is far more valuable than the first childhood. The first childhood was just given to you. You were not even asked, it was a pure gift. And we cannot value gifts. You value a thing only when you make effort for it, when you strive for it, and when it takes a long journey to come to it.

There is a Sufi story: A man, a seeker, came to a Sufi mystic. And he asked, 'I am searching for my master. Sir, I have heard you are a wise man. Can you tell me the characteristics of a master? How am I to judge? Even if I find my master, how am I going to decide that he is my master? I am a blind man; I am ignorant, I don't know anything about it. And without finding a master, it is said, no one can find God. So I am in search for a master. Help me.'

And the master told him a few things. He said, 'These are the characteristics. You will find the master in such a way, with such a behaviour, and he will be sitting under such a tree. And he will be wearing such a robe, and his eyes will be like this.'

And the man thanked the old man, and went in search. Thirty years passed, and the man roamed almost all over the world but he could not find the man who was his master according to the old man's valuation. Tired, exhausted, frustrated, he comes back to his home town and sees the old man. The old man has become very very old, but the moment he comes in.... The old man is sitting under the same tree – suddenly he sees this is the tree the old man had talked about. And this is the robe the old man had described. And these are the eyes, and this is the silence, that the old man had described. This is the benediction in the presence of the master. He is overjoyed.

But a great question also arises in his mind. He bows down, touches his feet, and says, 'Before I surrender to you, just tell me why you tortured me for these thirty years. Why didn't you tell me right then, "I am your master"?'

The old man started laughing, and he said, 'I told you, "He will be sitting under such a tree" – and this is the tree I was sitting under! And I told you, "This will be the robe he will be wearing" – and I

was wearing the same robe! I was the same man then, but you were not alert. You could not see me – you needed these thirty years' journeys from one corner to another corner of the world; you needed all this effort to recognize me. I was here, but you were not here.

'Now you are also here, you can see me. And I had to wait for you. It is not only a question for you, that you have been travelling. Think of me – I am so old, and I could not even die before you came back. And I have not changed the robe, in case you missed me again – for thirty years! I have never for a single moment left this tree! But you have come. The journey has been too long – but this is the way one discovers.'

God is always here, but we are not here. A child has to lose track; he has to go for thirty years' pilgrimage. Every child has to lose track, every child has to go astray. Only by going astray, only by suffering, will he attain eyes, clarity, transparency. Only by going into a thousand and one things, will he start looking for the real.

The unreal has to be searched. The unreal is attractive, the unreal is magnetic. And how can you know the real if you have not known the unreal? The child knows the real – but he has not known the unreal, so he cannot define the real. The child knows God – but he has not known the world, so he cannot define God. Each child comes like a saint, but has to become a sinner. Then the second childhood. If you don't attain to the second childhood you have missed your life.

So don't think, and don't be worried, that you have lost it. Everybody has to lose it – that should not be a problem. The problem is only if you go on and on, and you never come back. If this man goes on and on... thirty years, thirty lives, three hundred lives, three thousand lives... goes on and on, and never comes back, and never attains to the second childhood, then something has really gone wrong.

Err – to err is human. That is the way to learn. Go astray – going astray is the way to come back home. Forget God, so that you can remember him. Escape from God, so one day the thirst becomes a fire in you and you have to come to God again... Like a hungry man, like a thirsty man.

This had to happen to humanity too. Now there will be a great assertion of paganism in the world again – the second childhood. That's why Zen has become so important, so significant; Tantra has become such a significant word. Sufism, Hassidism, are more important now than Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism – why? Why Tantra? Why Tao? Why Zen? Why Sufi? Why Hassid? These are the pagan attitudes – they create the second childhood.

The world is getting ready; humanity is becoming more and more mature. This age is the age of humanity's youth. The childhood is no more; we have lost it, we have become corrupted. But don't be worried by it – that is how one attains to innocence again. And the second childhood is far more valuable than the first, because the second cannot be lost. The first has to be lost, is bound to be lost; no child, not even a Buddha, could retain it. No child can retain it; it is in the very nature of things. When something is given to you – and you were not seeking it, and you were not even asking for it, you were not ready even to receive it...

If you give a child a diamond, a diamond like the Kohinoor, he will play with it a little while and then throw it away. He does not know what it is. The Kohinoor is the Kohinoor, whether you know it or not.

The Kohinoor IS the Kohinoor – knowledge makes no difference. But the child will throw it away; he will become fed-up sooner or later. Just a stone – how long can you play with it? Even if it is very colourful, even if it is very shiny... but how long?

For the Kohinoor to come into your life again, you will need a thirst for it. You will need to feel a great missing – something missing inside your being. You will need a great desire. All desires should become lesser desires, and God becomes the supreme-most desire, the topmost desire. God is always here.

It happens to children, it happens to societies, it happens to civilizations, it happens to humanity at large, too. So don't be worried about Christianity – that was part. Christianity or those kinds of religion are the religions between these two childhoods, the first and the second. They condemn. They shout that you have gone astray: 'Come back!' They pull you back, they make you afraid. They give you great provocations, that if you come back you will attain great prizes, rewards, in heaven. If you don't come back, you are going to be thrown into hell. Hellfire is waiting for you; for eternity you will be in hell, suffering.

This is fear – creating fear in people, so that they will come back. But out of fear, even if you come, you never come. Because fear can never become love. Fear cannot be reduced into love, cannot be converted into love. Fear remains fear, and out of fear arises hatred.

That's why Christianity has created great hatred against religion. Friedrich Nietzsche is a by-product of Christianity; if Friedrich Nietzsche says God is dead, it is just a reaction to Christianity. Too much emphasis on God, on heaven and hell – somebody has to say it. I am all for Nietzsche – somebody has to say, 'Enough is enough. Stop all this nonsense! God is dead, and man is free' – because man feels in bondage if you create fear.

And greed? Greed again is a bondage. You just see – heaven, paradise, FIRDAUS, the idea of it – what is it? It is such greed, such lust. In the Mohammedan's FIRDAUS, heaven, it seems saints are doing nothing but copulating. Beautiful women are available, and streams of wine are flowing, and all that you need is immediately made available. And those beautiful women remain at the age of sixteen; they never grow.

And one more beautiful thing about that: they again become a virgin. Whenever a saint makes love to a woman – only saints go there – when a saint makes love to a woman, the moment he is finished, again she becomes a virgin. That is the miracle of paradise. And what are your saints doing there? It seems an orgy, sexual orgy. And streams of wine.... Here you say, 'Avoid wine, avoid women' – for what? To gain better women and more wine in heaven? This seems to be illogical.

But this is how people are provoked, through greed, to come back. Or fear: if you don't come through greed, then fear, then hellfire – and ETERNAL hellfire. You have not done so much sin, eternal hellfire is unjust. Okay, for ten years you are thrown into hell, one can understand – fifteen years, twenty years, fifty years. But eternal? You have not been eternally sinning here, so how can eternal punishment be given to you? It looks too much.

But that is not the point; the point is just to make people afraid. Fear and greed have been the base of many religions. And they have not been helpful; they have destroyed. They have not appealed to

the courageous, they have appealed only to the cowards – and when a cowardly person becomes religious the religion is bogus. Because a cowardly person CANNOT become religious; only a courageous person can become religious – religion needs great courage.

It is a jump into the unknown. It is a jump into the uncharted sea, with no maps. It is dropping the past and moving into the future, it is going into insecurity. It cannot be out of cowardice.

And in your temples and in your mosques, in your churches, cowards have gathered together. They are trembling with fear. And they are full of greed – afloat in greed, aflame with greed, agog with greed. These greedy and cowardly people cannot be religious. The basis of religion is to drop all fear and to drop all greed, and to move into the unknown. God is the unknown, the hidden. He is hidden HERE – in the trees, in the rocks, in you, in me. But to enter into that hidden reality, that occult, one needs great courage – it is going into a dark night without any light.

A Zen master was saying goodbye to one of his disciples, and the night was very dark. And the disciple was a little bit afraid, scared, because he had to pass a jungle of at least ten miles. And it was wild. And wild animals were there, and it was night – and a dark night with no moon. And it was getting late, almost half the night had passed. Talking to the master, he had completely forgotten.

Seeing him a little afraid, the master says, 'You look a little afraid, so I will give you a lamp.' He puts a small paper lamp into his hand, lights the lamp. The disciple thanks him, goes down the steps, and the master calls him and says, 'Stop!' And the master comes close and blows the flame out. And he says, 'A real master gives courage; he does not help cowardice. Go into the dark, be your own light. And remember, nobody else's light will be of any help; you will have to attain to your own light. Be a flame to your own being. Go into the dark, be courageous.'

He says a real master never helps any cowardice. In a small act, by blowing the flame out, the master gives a great message: Religion is only for the courageous.

Those who followed Jesus, they were courageous people. They were not many, they were very few – you could have counted them on your fingers. Those who followed Buddha were courageous people. Christians are not courageous, Buddhists are not courageous.

Those who are with me are courageous people. Once I am gone, your children and your children's children may pay their respect to me, but they will not be courageous.

Religion exists only when there is an alive master to LIVE it for you. When the master is gone then religion becomes dead. Cowardly people gather together around a dead religion; then there is no fear. They worship the scripture, they worship the word, they worship the statue – all dead things.

But whenever a Jesus is there, or a Buddha is there, or a Mohammed is there, they are very much afraid. They find a thousand and one ways to escape; they find a thousand and one ways to rationalize their escape. They condemn the real master – why? The real master will not support your cowardice. He will not give you any more greed – you already have too much – and he will not make you afraid. His whole effort will be to take fear and greed away from you, so that you can become capable of living your life in totality.

Christianity and religions like that had to happen. They have to be forgiven; don't be angry about them. But now they have to go, too – now the world is no more in need of them. They are tumbling, they are scattering, they are dying. In fact they are dead. But people are so blind that for them to know that their church or their temple is dead takes such a long time. They are so unconscious, they cannot understand it immediately. Christianity is dead, Hinduism dead, Islam is dead. In Islam, only a small thing lives, still has a flame – that is Sufism. In Christianity, only a few mystics are still alive. Otherwise the church and the pope and the vatican are just cemeteries, graveyards.

In Hinduism, a few mystics are still alive – a Krishnamurti, somewhere a Raman – but far and few in between. Otherwise, the SHANKARACHARYAS are dead people. But nobody goes to a living master. In Buddhism only Zen is alive. In Judaism only Hassidism is alive.

The organized religion is not the real religion. The unorganized, the rebellious, the unorthodox, the heretic religion is the real religion – has always been so. Religion comes always as a rebellion – its very spirit is that of rebelliousness. The days for Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, are gone. In the future, a totally different kind of religion, a different kind of climate, will surround the earth. Religions will disappear; there will only be a kind of religiousness. People will find their own religion individually; people will find their own prayer, their own way of praying. There is no need to follow anybody's prescribed idea – that is not the path, that is not the way of the courageous. That is the way of the coward.

And God is available – you just have to become courageous to look into his eyes.

You ask me: AND THEN DEATH AND RESURRECTION BECAME THE RELIGION OF THE WEST. That's true. Christianity has never been concerned with Christ; it has been more concerned with the cross. It has not worshipped Christ it has been worshipping the cross. The cross is a symbol of death. Why? Because death is the basic fear. Making people alert about their death makes them afraid. If you make a person very much mindful of death, every possibility is there that he will start shaking and trembling. And when a person is shaking and trembling you can victimize him very easily; you can convert him into any nonsense. He is ready to believe anything – if you just promise immortality he is ready.

So followers of Christianity say, 'Those who are in the church will be saved, and those who are not in the church, we don't make any guarantee for them. They are doomed; they cannot be saved.' And that's what all other religions say. This is creating fear. Bring death into their mind, they become afraid – who will not become afraid of death? And then an afraid man is prone to be converted into a slave very easily.

And why resurrection? Death and resurrection became the foundation of Christianity in the West. Death gives you fear, and the promise of resurrection gives you greed. If you die within the church, you will resurrect. You will resurrect as a divine being, with all that you always wanted, with all that you always needed – beautiful, with a golden body, with an aura around you, you will be resurrected.

These are fear-greed tricks, punishment-reward tricks. This is what B. F. Skinner goes on doing with his rats: make them afraid and they start doing things. This is what you see in a circus: make the elephant afraid – such a courageous animal and such a wise animal, but just make him afraid. And he starts doing foolish things for you – he will sit on a stool, he will bow down to a man... he can kill

that man within a second. Even lions, seeing the whip, tremble – just make them afraid, that's all. Even lions can be tamed, and elephants can be taught and disciplined. Create fear and reward – if the elephant follows you, give him good food; if he does not follow, starve him. A simple technique.

That's what so-called religions have been doing to man. Guilt and sin were taught. Naturally, if you want to make people afraid – and that is the only way to exploit them – teach them that everything is sin, all that you enjoy is sin. Death creates fear, but death is far away. After fifty years or seventy years you will die – who bothers? 'Seventy years? We will see. Right now we are not dying.'

Maybe old people become afraid. That's why you find more old people in churches, temples. Old women, old men – women more than men, because they become more afraid. Old, dying, just on the verge, so they know now something has to be done. Life is going, slipping by; they have to manage something for the future.

Do you see young people in your churches? in your temples? And remember, wherever you see young people, there religion is alive. A young person, if he becomes interested in religion, his religion cannot be that of fear and cannot be that of death. His religion will be of life.

Many times people come to me and they say, 'Why do so many young people come to you?' They come because I teach the religion of life, of love, of joy. I don't create any guilt, and I don't go on conditioning their minds that 'This is sin, that is sin.' There are mistakes, but there is no sin. Mistakes, certainly, there are – but a mistake is a mistake. If you are doing a mathematical problem and you make two plus two equal five, is it a sin? It is just a mistake; it can be corrected. No need to throw you in hell forever just because you counted two plus two as five. It is simply a mistake, pardonable.

All that you call sin is nothing but mistakes. And mistakes are the way of learning. Those people who never commit mistakes are the most stupid people, because they never grow. I teach you: Go on committing mistakes, never be afraid. Just remember one thing – don't commit the same mistake again and again, because that is meaningless. Be inventive, commit new mistakes every day – then you learn. Just don't commit the same mistake every day, because that is foolish. You have committed it once, you have known it is a mistake – you were angry, and you have seen what anger is – now being angry again is stupid. You have seen, it is just meaningless. It is destructive – it destroys the other, it destroys you. And it does not bring anything; no flower flowers in you.

You become less by anger, you don't become more. Love, be kind – and suddenly you are more flowing, bigger, higher; you start floating, you have less weight. So learn: when you love, when you are loving, you can fly, wings grow. When you hate, when you are angry, you become like a rock. Then gravitation is too much on you, you become heavy.

Can't you see that? Simple – just like two plus two is four. Life is a learning, it is a school. That's why we have been sent here, that is the purpose – not to punish you. I would like to change your whole idea about it. You have been taught that you have been sent here to be punished – this is absolutely wrong. You are sent here to learn.

Why should God be such a torturer? Is he a sadist or something? – he enjoys torturing people? And if, as these people say, you have been sent here to be punished, then why for the first time were you

sent? There must have been your first life – before that you had not committed anything, because how can you commit sins unless you come here? You cannot have committed any sins – then why were you sent for the first time?

They don't have any answer. Jainas don't have, Hindus don't have, Mohammedans don't have; they don't have any answer for it. Why has man been sent? Maybe this time you have been sent because in the past life you committed sins. Okay, but what about the first life? And if this is the first life, as Christians say, then why have you been sent here? Now, they have a very absurd idea: because Adam committed sin. You have nothing to do with Adam; this is simply absurd. Somebody you don't know, whether he ever even existed or not, committed sin and the whole humanity is suffering for it. Your father committed sin and you have been sent to jail. And Adam is not even your father – not even your father's father, not even your father's father's father – he is the first man.

And what he has done does not seem to be a sin at all. It seems simple courage, it seems simple rebelliousness. Each child needs that much spine. God said to Adam: 'Don't eat the fruit of this tree. This tree is the tree of knowledge.' And Adam ate it. I think anybody who has any soul would do the same. If Adam had been dead and dull, then he would have followed. He must have been challenged; in fact, that is the very purpose. Otherwise, on the earth there are millions and millions of trees – just think, if God had not shown the particular tree, it is very very impossible that Adam would have found it. That was only one tree in the whole garden of God, and the garden is infinite. That was only one tree of which God said particularly, 'Don't eat it. If you eat the fruit of knowledge you will be expelled.'

My own understanding is, God was putting a challenge to him. He was trying to see whether he is alive or dead. He was trying to see whether he is capable of disobeying, whether he can say no – God was trying to see whether he is just a yes-man. And Adam proved his mettle: he ate the fruit. He was ready to be thrown into the world, but he showed spirit. It is not sin, it is simply courage.

Every child has to disobey his father one day or other, every child has to disobey his mother one day or other. In fact, the day you disobey, that is the day you start becoming mature – never before it. So only stupid children never disobey. Intelligent children certainly disobey; intelligent children find a thousand and one ways to disobey the parents. You can look around: you will always find the intelligent child disobeying. Because he has to grow his own soul – if he goes on obeying you, obeying you, obeying you, when will he grow? how will he grow? He will remain dull and limp. He will not have his own soul, he will not have his own individuality.

No, Adam has not committed any sin; Adam is the first saint. He disobeyed God, and God wanted it. That is exactly what God wanted – that Adam should disobey. Disobeying God, Adam will go far away into the world; he will lose his first childhood. Then he will suffer many many mistakes, and from those mistakes he will learn.

And one day he will come back – as Christ, as Buddha, as Mahavira, as Krishna, he will come back.

This going away is a must for coming back. This is not against God really, this is precisely what God wanted to happen. It was absolutely planned by God himself. So I don't call it sin. Why is Adam called a sinner? He is called a sinner because your religions depend on calling you sinners, on condemning you. The more you are condemned, the more you touch their feet. The more you

are condemned, the more you crawl on the earth and beg. The more you are condemned, the more afraid you become. The more you are afraid, the more you need mediators.

You don't know where God is. Your priest knows, your pope knows; he has a direct line with God. If he interferes, only then can you be saved – otherwise your whole life is sin. Only if HE persuades God for you then you can be saved. This is the whole trick, the trick of the priest. The priest is not really the religious man, the priest is the businessman – doing business in the name of religion, exploiting.

The ugliest profession in the world is not of the prostitutes, the ugliest profession is of the priests.

'WHY ISN'T HE LIKE THESEUS OR JASON OR HERMES?' He is. 'IS THE CONCEPT OF SIN JUST A TRICK? TO MAKE MEN MEDITATE?' Yes, it is a trick, but not to make them meditate. It is a trick to make them slaves. Meditation is a totally different thing. Meditation never comes out of fear, meditation comes out of understanding. Meditation comes out of love, out of compassion. Meditation comes out of living your life in all climates, in all seasons. Looking into each fact of life deeply, understanding it – and if it is meaningless discarding it, if it is meaningful choosing it – by and by, you go on collecting the essential and discarding the non-essential.

Both are there. The chaff and the wheat, both are there. The roses and the weeds, both are there. And one has to make a distinction between the chaff and the wheat: one has to throw the chaff and collect the wheat.

This much intelligence is needed, otherwise you cannot become a religious person. These fears don't give you understanding. They in fact cloud your mind more, they make you more unclear about life. They don't allow you to go into life totally and experience it – they are against experience.

Meditation comes when you live life, and you see life as it happens. Not because Buddha says anger is bad – that will not help; you will become a parrot, a pundit – but if you see into your own anger and this understanding arises, that anger is meaningless, poisonous. Not because Krishna says, 'Leave everything to God, surrender to God' – no, following Krishna you will not attain to God – but see how your ego is creating all kinds of miseries for you.

Seeing that, one day you drop the ego, and you say, 'Now I will live in a totally surrendered way. Whatsoever God wants through me, will happen. I will not have any desire of my own, I will not have any will of my own. I drop my will.'

Seeing the misery that ego brings, comes surrender. Seeing the misery that anger brings, comes love. Seeing the misery that sexuality brings, arises BRAHMACHARYA, celibacy. But one has to go through it – there is no shortcut, and these things cannot be borrowed from anybody.

Question 2

WHY DO YOU INSIST SO MUCH ON THE IRRATIONAL? WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE RATIONAL?

The rational is not rational enough. That is what is wrong with it. If you are a REALLY rational person you will see that many things are irrational in life. A rational person, how can he avoid seeing that

there are many irrational things in life? A rational person is bound to stumble upon many irrational facts.

Your love is irrational. You fall in love with a woman; you cannot produce any reason for it. You simply shrug your shoulders, you say, 'It happened.' You may find some ways – you will say that she looks beautiful, this and that. But she does not look beautiful to anybody else; nobody else has fallen in love with her. So it cannot be a simple case – because she is beautiful, that's why you have fallen in love. In fact the truth is just the other way round – you have fallen in love, that's why she looks beautiful. And one day get married to her, and one day suddenly she will no more be beautiful. And you will start thinking, 'Was I mad? Why have I fallen with this woman?' And you will start thinking she is the ugliest woman in the world.

Wives and husbands never look beautiful to each other – because that love, that so-called love, that illusion, wears fast. If you never get your woman you may love her for your whole life – that's possible. That's why Majanu goes on loving, and crying, 'Laila, Laila, Laila!' – because he couldn't get her. He was a fortunate man. Those who get their Lailas, they know that once you get, then you start praying to God, 'How to get rid of?'

What happens? It is not beauty – something irrational in you, something from your unconscious that you are not aware of, possesses you.

Now the psychology of the unconscious has looked into the matter more deeply. The child, each child, boy or girl, carries two personalities within himself or herself – the personality of the mother and the father, because a child is made from two biologies, two psychologies. A child is a combination of two persons, two personalities – something is contributed by the father and something is contributed by the mother. If the child is a male child the mother-part inside him will go on looking for some woman who is almost similar.

Your woman inside is nothing but your mother part inside you. And when some woman fits with your inner woman, you fall in love – but this is absolutely irrational. And exactly that happens when you fall in love with a man. You carry your father inside you – when some man fits the image.... Nobody can fit the image totally, that's the trouble. You are not going to get your father as your husband ever; your father cannot become your husband, your mother cannot become your wife.

And no two individuals are alike – this is the problem. And you are searching for your mother unconsciously. When you suddenly see a woman as beautiful, that is your mother – in some way she resembles your mother. But in some way only. Maybe her voice is like your mother, maybe her eyes have the same colour, maybe her hair is the same colour. Or maybe the way she walks is exactly the way of your mother. And you don't know it; you don't know it consciously. It is in your unconscious – it is hidden deep there in the darkness. And you fall in love. But no woman can be exactly like your mother, so sooner or later things start coming up which are not like your mother. Then disturbance starts – the honeymoon is complete.

These are irrational facts. Man, if really rational, is bound to stumble upon many many facts which are irrational. Even your greatest mathematician and logician falls in love with a woman. Irrational, utterly irrational.

Why do I insist for the irrational? Because, to me, reason is just in the middle. Below reason there is the irrational – the irrational of the unconscious. And above reason is again the irrational – the irrational of the superconscious. And the conscious mind is a very small mind, very tiny mind. Below is an ocean: sexuality, anger, greed, possessiveness, jealousy, violence – the whole animal past is there. A whole animal past exists there in your unconscious that is absolutely irrational.

Have you not observed sometimes? – when a man is really angry he looks more like an animal than like a human being. When a man is really mad he barks like a dog or roars like a lion or jumps like a tiger or behaves like a monkey. That's why, once you are out of the anger, you start feeling embarrassed and you say, 'Sorry.' And you say, 'In spite of me... how it happened I don't know.' It came from below; it came from the basement of your being. You were not aware of it; it took possession of you.

Below your reason there is a vast continent of irrationality. The animals exist there, the vegetables exist there, rocks exist there – the whole past. That is the real meaning of the theory that you have been incarnated in many ways. There have been eighty-four thousand YONIS – YOU have lived eighty-four thousand lives on different planes. Some day you were like a rock – something of it is still carried in your unconscious. Some day you were a plant; something of it is still carried; the flower and the thorn, both. Some day you were like a dog and some day you were a tiger and some day you were a fox. And all that is carried – piled upon each other, they are there. Whenever you lose your rational, the irrational comes up and takes possession of you.

Above it, again there is the superconscious. That too is irrational. There God is hidden. Below is the animal, above is God. If you fall below humanity you become animal, if you go above humanity you become divine. People are afraid of the irrational because they know only one kind of irrational – that which is below. And all great religions teach the irrational which is above. You have to go higher than yourself. You have to drop your logic.

When you meditate, again that happens. When you are angry then too it happens, then too you are below reason. When you are meditating you are above reason – but you go beyond reason in both the ways. When a man is mad he is below reason. And when a man becomes a saint he is above reason. That's why saints and madmen look a little alike – something similar. One thing at least: they both are not in their rational minds. Below reason is a vast continent of irreason. And above reason is the whole sky of divinity, the infinite sky of divinity.

And Zen particularly is irrational. You cannot figure it out with your reason.

I was reading a book of Aldous Huxley. He talks about a Chinese Zen master: 'The Chinese Zen master was giving a tea-party one freezing night. Kaizenji said to his disciples, "There is a certain thing. It is as black as lacquer. It supports heaven and earth. It always appears in activity, but no one can grasp it in activity. My disciples, how can you grasp it?"'

'He was indicating the nature of TATHATA' – suchness – or Tao, or DHAMMA. He was indicating the nature of existence itself. He was saying: 'There is a certain thing...' CERTAIN, he says, because there is no way to specify it; you cannot pin-point it, it is so big. 'It is as black as lacquer' – as black as a dark night. You can be lost in it. It is not like light, it is more like darkness. Why? Because in the light, distinctions are clear: you know that this is a tree and this is a pillar, and this is a man and this is a woman – you know separation, distinction.

In light, multiplicity arises. In darkness, the one. If suddenly it gets dark, then where is the pillar and where is the tree, and where is the man and where is the woman? All disappear into oneness. So that TATHATA – that suchness, Tao, DHAMMA, truth, or God.... Any name will do – all are alike, all mean the same, all are just metaphors.

"It supports heaven and earth. It always appears in activity, but no one can grasp it in activity. My disciples, how can you grasp it?" He was indicating the nature of TATHATA, metaphorically of course...'

And this was no ordinary question; Zen masters ask questions in particular situations. Now it was clear. The night is freezing, the tea is ready, the samovar is humming, the fragrance of the tea is in the tea-room, the master is sitting with his disciples, and suddenly he asked this. Out of the blue. Now, this is no time to talk great philosophy; the night is freezing and they would like to have hot tea. And the tea is ready, and now it is a dangerous question, because if it is not answered rightly – that is the practice of Zen masters – he will tell the disciples to go home. The tea-party, which has not even started, will be finished. They are not going to get the tea.

'The disciples of Kaizenji did not know how to reply.' Not that they cannot create philosophy, not that they cannot spin words – they can. But a Zen master is not asking for words, he is asking for INSIGHT. Unless you have experienced it, you cannot say anything – and whatsoever you say will be meaningless. Reason can propose many things, but those will not be accepted. The thing has to come from existential experience.

'Then finally one of them, Tai Shuso by name, tried: "You fail to grasp it because you try to grasp it in motion." He was indicating that when he meditated in silence, TATHATA appeared within himself.'

He is saying that if you are silent, unmoving, if there is no movement of the mind inside – all has stopped, the mind has halted, there is no activity, there is just WU-WEI, inactivity, passivity – then it appears. That Tao, that existence, that God, suddenly fills you, overflows from you. You cannot grasp it while the mind is moving, is in action; you cannot grasp it. But when the mind is not moving, it comes on its own accord. You cannot grasp it if you try to grasp it, because to grasp means activity. But it comes when you are not even trying to grasp it; when you are just a receptacle, a womb, then it comes. It comes in a state of feminine inactivity, receptivity. He has answered very rationally. But...

'Kaizenji dismissed the tea-party before it had really begun. He was displeased with the answer.'

It is a rational answer, it appeals – you will also think what he is saying is right. But it is half. Unless that tathata can be caught in activity too, it will not be the whole, it will not be the total. If you cannot find God in the marketplace too, and you can find it only in the Himalayas, then that God will be only half God. And a half God is a dead God. You cannot divide God; you cannot say when you are sitting in a Himalayan cave it is there. It arises – you need not grasp it, it grabs you, rather.

This is what many people have done. They say, 'Escape, renounce. Here there is no God: go to the Himalayas.' That silence is of the Himalayas – it has nothing to do with God. It is the silence of the cave. Come back, after thirty years sitting in a cave, to M.G. Road in Poona – and finished is all your silence, and all your attainments are gone.

That's why renunciates become afraid of the world – they don't come there, they cling to their cave. This is escapism. And this is not God, that you can find only in the caves. God is everywhere. Only God is: he has to be everywhere. Even in the marketplace he is as throbbing-alive as in the Himalayas. In the Himalayas he is silent, in the marketplace he is noisy – but he is everywhere. When you are sitting unmoving he is unmoving, and when you are running he is running – but he is there.

So the answer is rational, but not whole; reason cannot answer for the whole. Reason divides, reason analyzes, reason dissects – it has dissected even God. God cannot be dissected. Even while you are ignorant, God is in you. He is your ignorance – who else can be? And when you know, he is your knowing. God is your ignorance and God is your enlightenment. That's what Buddha means when he says: The world is nirvana. It is one; these are two aspects of the same thing. Don't divide – you divide, and you miss.

The master dismissed the party. Aldous Huxley comments on this. He thinks – he is a great philosopher in his own right – he thinks if he had been there in the party, he would have suggested a better answer. What is his answer? He says, 'My own guess is that the tea-party might have been prolonged, at least for a few minutes, if Tai Shuso had answered in some such way as this: "If I cannot grasp TATHATA in activity, then obviously I must cease to be 'I', so that TATHATA may be able to grasp this ex-me and make it one with itself, not merely in the immobility and silence of meditation – as happens to ARHATS – but also in activity – as happens to BODHISATTVAS, for whom SANSARA and NIRVANA are identical."

Now this is getting even worse. And it is good that Aldous Huxley was not there, otherwise he would have been beaten! The master has simply dismissed the party. That is great respect towards the disciple who has answered – simply dismissing it. Zen masters keep their staff by their side, and on and off they hit. Sometimes for no reason, no visible reason, they hit. But one thing is always there: if they see that you are bringing in your head too much, they hit your head. They say, 'Slip out of it.' They are saying go deeper than the head or higher than the head; don't cling to the head.

This is too heady an answer. A guess won't do, Aldous Huxley. He says, 'This is my guess.' A guess won't do! – only experience. Nobody can guess; nobody can suppose that 'This answer might have helped.' No, guesswork is guesswork – it is rational. It is of the head, of the mind. Aldous Huxley would have gotten really beaten – this much philosophy would not be tolerated by a Zen master.

That's why I insist so much for the irrational height. You have to go above your heads. Always try one small experiment: standing before the mirror, just think you have no head. Every day – just for twenty minutes, thirty minutes, forty minutes – stand before the mirror and just look at the head and say, 'I don't have any head.' Within two or three months, one day suddenly you will see the head has disappeared: you are standing there without a head. Then you will know what the answer can be – not before it; you cannot guess. I know the answer but I will not say. Because it cannot be said.

The master was not asking for an articulate answer; the disciples had to DO something. They have to ACT immediately in some way; they have to SHOW it. Some disciple has to show it – immediately, then and there, in his act, in his being – that it is there. And you cannot deceive a master – if it is not there, it is not there. If it is there, he will immediately feel it is there.

It happens – a disciple comes to a master, the master has given him a koan. A koan is a special method to drive you crazy. It is a riddle which has no answer – the answer is not possible, the answer exists not. The disciple knows it, the master knows it, that there is no answer. And the disciple has to try to find the answer – for months together, sometimes years together. Unless you find the answer, the master will not give you further instructions. The koan has to be solved. And the disciple knows that this is absurd – but it has to be solved. And deep down he knows, he has heard, he has read, that there is no answer. But the master says, 'Go on, find it.'

So when you try to find an answer for something for which no answer exists, by and by you start getting berserk, crazy. You try and try, and it goes on slipping and slipping and slipping. In Japan, it is called 'Zen-madness'. In Japan, even doctors know it – because sometimes it happens to the disciple, and his family may take him to the doctor. Because he goes berserk – he starts shouting, doing things, screaming, shaking, quaking, trembling, for no reason. Or starts laughing or crying for no reason, or starts dancing. Sometimes the family will take the person to the doctor. But in Japan they know.

And that has to be known all over the world. In fact, every medical college should teach the doctors a special course – that there are people who are not really insane: don't treat them, otherwise you will disturb them for their whole life. Your medicines, your electric shocks, your tranquilizers, your injections, are dangerous if the person is suffering from Zen-madness. Then you will destroy all his growth possibilities. In Japan they won't treat the person. The moment they feel that this is a Zen disease, the first thing they do is inquire: 'Is the man in any way connected with any Zen master or Zen monastery? If he is connected, then take him to the master, take him to the monastery. Don't bring him to the medical practitioner.'

A koan creates an artificial neurosis. We are carrying much neurosis within. It is repressed – we are sitting on top of it, it is like a volcano. That Zen koan, that impossible riddle, goes on goading, goading – and one day suddenly that volcano erupts, explodes. Then you are no more in control; you go beyond control. You cannot manage yourself; all your reason is gone in fragments. It has been an explosion, and you are thrown away completely. You are no more the same as you were before; something new has happened.

This Zen-madness is the ANSWER. The master will say, 'Good. So it has happened. Now wait, now just be patient.' For three weeks, four weeks, six weeks at the most, the person has simply to wait. Nothing to do, he eats, sleeps, takes his bath, as he feels. He is left alone in the monastery in a small cottage, far away. Nobody goes to talk to him, nobody is allowed to advise him. He simply relaxes there, takes a sunbath, lies on the grass, rolls on the grass. Left alone, whatsoever he feels like doing he does. When he wants to dance he dances, when he wants to shout he shouts.

Only one thing is taken care of – that he should not do any violence to himself. And ordinarily, people never do. Very rarely, somebody can go too far – out of a hundred, only one percent of cases. That care has to be taken – the master and other disciples go on watching from far away. No violence should be done to himself or to somebody else, that's all.

Within three weeks, six weeks, everything cools down. And the man comes with a new face – with his original face. Fresh like dewdrops in the morning. His eyes are innocent. He has passed through madness, he has gone beyond madness; he has entered the superconscious. Before you enter the superconscious you will have to pass through a kind of crisis. This crisis is created by the koan.

This crisis, I am creating it here with many methods. People who come from the outside, just to watch, cannot understand it. It is a Zen crisis. When people go berserk, they think this is driving people mad – ‘What kind of religion is this?’ They don’t know. Religion basically drives you mad so that you can go beyond madness. Once you have passed that barrier you will never be mad; once you have passed that barrier you are a totally different kind of man. A new man is born. A great grace descends, and joy and peace and equilibrium.

It is almost like making love – a millionfold. When you make love, what happens? Sexuality and spirituality are very alike. Sexuality is very small, atomic – and spirituality is vast like the whole sky. The difference is of quantity, but ultimately quantitative difference leads to qualitative difference too.

Millionfold, great, is the orgasm of spirituality – but it is an orgasm. It is exactly like sexual orgasm. When you are making love, what happens? First, tension starts mounting. More tension, more tension, tension starts mounting, you start feeling crazy. A moment comes when you feel that if orgasm is not going to happen you will go mad: the energy has to explode. And then the energy explodes – from a certain peak the energy explodes.

When the energy explodes there is great joy. Because in that explosion the ego disappears for a moment. You are no more. God is. You are no more, TATHATA is – only pure existence. Neither the woman is nor the man is; both have disappeared into orgasm. Both are pulsating into a different wavelength.

But that is there only for a single moment – one moment, two moments, three moments – that joy. And then what happens? After the joy has settled, you cool down. Great peace arises, great silence. You fall asleep in a beautiful slumber. This is a very tiny experience, very very tiny, just like a straw. And spirituality is a jungle. The whole jungle. But you can understand from it – this is your experience, and this experience can become a metaphor.

In spirituality the same happens on a very great expansion. On a cosmic scale it happens. In meditation, in koan, in mantra, in chanting, in prayer, you go on creating a tension, a tension, a tension – and tension mounts and mounts and takes months, years, sometimes the whole life. And the mounting goes on and on and on, and the tension becomes so much one day that there is no possibility to bear it any more. Then it explodes.

And that explosion is of great joy, ecstasy. One dances, one laughs. And then the joy subsides into deep silence; one becomes cool, tranquil. One has arrived.

But just as sexual orgasm is irrational, so is spiritual orgasm. All orgasmic experiences are irrational. That’s why I insist for the irrational.

Question 3

WHY IS ZEN CALLED THE PATH OF PARADOX?

Religion as such has to be paradoxical, there is no other way – because life consists of contradictions. They look like contradictions to us – they are not, in fact. They help each other.

Have you not seen it in an arch? The architect does the same – he puts bricks against each other. If you put the bricks not against each other, you cannot make an arch – the house will fall. Half the bricks face this way, and half the bricks face that way, and they both are there. They are the same bricks – you can put them facing in one line, the house will fall. But when they are put against each other, great energy is created. And that great energy becomes a strength.

That's why man and woman create the child. Man alone cannot create, woman alone cannot create. Bricks put opposite to each other become a great arch; great energy is created.

Life and death, put against each other, create the whole game, the whole play, the LEELA. Life, in every dimension, is paradoxical. So religion has to be paradoxical. If a religion is not paradoxical then it is just poor philosophy. Then it is just man-made, mind-created, just a theology – not religion.

One day, the emperor Liang Wu Ti invited Master Fu Ta Shih to expound the Diamond Sutra. As soon as he had ascended to his seat, the master knocked the table once with a ruler and descended from his seat. As the emperor was startled, the master asked him, 'Does Your Majesty understand?'

'I do not,' replied the emperor.

The saintly master said, 'The Bodhisattva has finished expounding the sutra.'

He has just hit the table with a ruler. And he says, 'I am finished with my discourse. I have said all that can be said on the Diamond Sutra.'

The Diamond Sutra is the most precious Buddhist scripture. Only a Zen master can do this – such strange behaviour. But it is very meaningful; he has said all. Because the whole Diamond Sutra goes on repeating only one thing, only one thing, again and again: Be aware. Be aware. Be aware. That is the whole message of all the Buddhas: Be aware, don't be sleepy.

Now, this is a Zen way. He hits the table with a ruler. The emperor must be sitting there – sleepy, dreamy, mind somewhere else, in a thousand and one places except where he was sitting. Now, by this beating of the table, suddenly the emperor is startled – he must have become alert for a moment. And the message has been given. This is a non-linguistic way of giving messages.

And not only this – the master says, 'The Bodhisattva has finished expounding the sutra.' He does not say, 'I have finished.' He says, 'The Buddha has finished.' Only a man who has disappeared into utter silence can say that – 'Buddha has spoken through me.'

Another day, the emperor again asked, 'Sir, come. I could not understand that great exposition – come again.' So the master came.

Wearing a robe, a hat and a pair of shoes, the Bodhisattva came to the palace, where the emperor asked him, 'Are you a monk?'

Because monks don't wear shoes, Buddhist monks don't wear shoes – and the Bodhisattva is wearing shoes, so the emperor asks, 'Are you a monk?'

In reply, the Bodhisattva pointed a finger at his hat. 'Are you a Taoist?' asked the emperor. In reply, the Bodhisattva pointed his finger at his shoes. 'Are you a lay man?' asked the emperor. In reply, the Bodhisattva pointed his finger at his monk's robe.

What he is saying is: 'I am all and I am none. You see, I have the hat of the monk. You see, I have the shoes of a Taoist saint. And how can I be a lay man? You see my robe, of ascetic practices, disciplines. I am all. And I am none.'

The emperor said, 'I don't understand. Yesterday I missed, today I have again missed.' The master says, 'This is my final exposition: listen – and I will never come back again. If you understand, you understand. If you don't understand, you don't understand.' And he said this GATHA:

THE HANDLESS HOLD THE HOE.

A PEDESTRIAN WALKS, RIDING ON A WATER BUFFALO.

A MAN PASSES OVER THE BRIDGE;

THE BRIDGE BUT NOT THE WATER FLOWS.

And he went out of the palace and never came again.

This is absurd, what he says – THE HANDLESS HOLD THE HOE. How can the handless hold anything? But that is how it is happening. That which abides in you is handless, and is holding all kinds of things. God is handless, and is supporting the whole world. And you are handless in your innermost being – you don't have hands or legs or a head, you are formless. But you are holding a thousand and one things.

A PEDESTRIAN WALKS, RIDING ON A WATER BUFFALO. He says: A man is sitting on the water buffalo and still walking. He is saying: God is taking you, you are riding on him – and still you think you have the responsibility to walk.

It is like... a beggar was passing and the emperor came in a chariot. And he took pity on the beggar – an old man, and the town was far away, and the old man would have to drag himself – so he said to the old man, 'You come in, sit in my chariot.'

The beggar was very much afraid, but you cannot say no to an emperor. He was very much afraid – a beggar, and sitting with the emperor? it was too embarrassing. But you cannot say no. So he came up, sat in the chariot in one corner – very much afraid, something might go wrong – but still keeping his bag on his head.

After a little while, the emperor said, 'Why don't you put your bag down?' And the beggar said, 'Sir, it is much too kind of you that you are carrying me in your chariot. I don't want to make more weight on your chariot; I will carry my bag on my head.'

Zen says the doer, the only doer, is God – or TATHATA, or Tao. You unnecessarily have become doers. Riding on a water buffalo, and you are walking – unnecessarily walking, and the water buffalo is carrying you. The rivet is taking you, and unnecessarily you are swimming. Relax!

A MAN PASSES OVER THE BRIDGE; THE BRIDGE BUT NOT THE WATER FLOWS. This is tremendously beautiful. Very paradoxical – THE BRIDGE BUT NOT THE WATER FLOWS. Zen people say the body is a bridge; you pass through the body. You are like water – liquid, ungraspable, formless. You pass through the body; you don't change. The water flows not, your water of life flows not. And the bridge goes on flowing – your body goes on changing every day. One day it was a child, another day it became young, then old. Healthy, ill, the body goes on changing.

Scientists used to say, ten years before, that the body changes completely in seven years – TOTALLY. After seven years you will not find a single iota of the old. All goes flowing out. Now they say it happens in one year, not seven years – in one year's time you don't have anything of the old, everything changes. The body goes on throwing out the old, and goes on getting the new from food, from water, from air – goes on replacing. The body is a river-like flow.

But the body is the bridge; you are the passer. You don't flow, the body flows – the bridge flows, the water does not flow.

These paradoxical statements are of tremendous value – you can find them in all the world mystics: in Eckhart, in Kabir, in Dadu, in Boehme, and more so in the Zen masters. Zen is a path of paradox.

Listen to these lines of T. S. Eliot.

IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW

YOU MUST GO BY A WAY WHICH IS THE WAY OF IGNORANCE.

IN ORDER TO POSSESS WHAT YOU DO NOT POSSESS

YOU MUST GO BY THE WAY OF DISPOSSESSION.

IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT WHAT YOU ARE NOT

YOU MUST GO THROUGH THE WAY IN WHICH YOU ARE NOT.

AND WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW IS THE ONLY THING YOU KNOW

AND WHAT YOU OWN IS WHAT YOU DON'T OWN

AND WHERE YOU ARE IS WHERE YOU ARE NOT.

These lines are perfect Zen, pure Zen. Meditate over these lines, find out what T. S. Eliot means. These are very profound. It can be a koan for you.

AND WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW IS THE ONLY THING YOU KNOW...

You don't know yourself, and that is the only thing you know. And if you don't know that, what else can you know? The knower knows only oneself – that is the only thing that can be known, because that is the only thing where we are. Everything else is, at the most, looked at from the outside; it can

become only an acquaintance. There is only one thing you can look at from the inside, and that is you.

AND WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW IS THE ONLY THING YOU KNOW

AND WHAT YOU OWN IS WHAT YOU DON'T OWN...

See the point of it. What you own is the only thing you don't own. You own your house – but how can you own it? It was here, and you were not. And one day you will be gone, and it will be here. How can you own it? You come and go. And the house remains and the world remains. You cannot own these things, you only pretend.

AND WHAT YOU OWN IS WHAT YOU DON'T OWN.

Seeing this, the Buddha leaves his palace. Seeing this, the Mahavir leaves his kingdom – seeing this, that 'This is not what I own, so why bother about it? It has to be taken away, one day or other, so why be unnecessarily anxious about it?'

AND WHERE YOU ARE IS WHERE YOU ARE NOT.

Have you watched it? Where are you? People are in their bodies – there you are not. People are in their minds – and there you are not. Your reality is somewhere else beyond the body and behind the mind.

Meditate over these lines.